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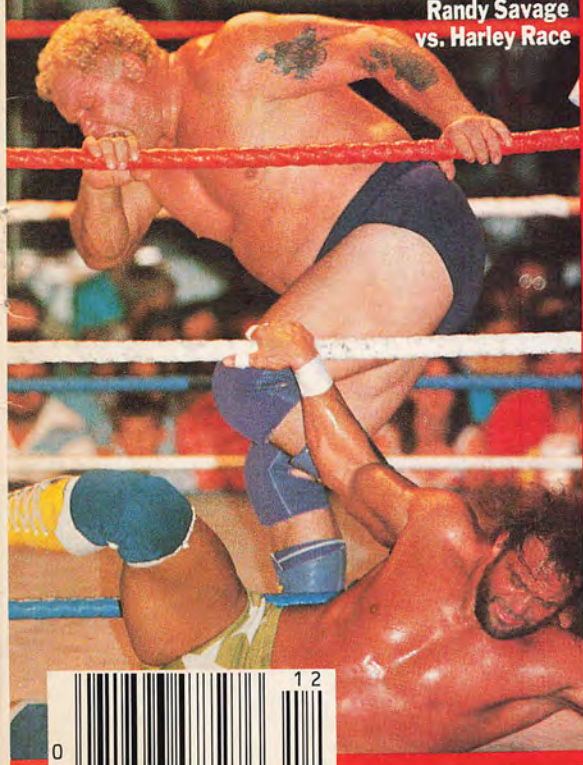
Wrestling

**FROM THE PUBLISHERS OF
PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED**

**Rhodes Challenges Luger:
WILL DUSTY'S U.S. TITLE
HOPES SPLIT THE
SUPERPOWERS?**

**WARNING TO RANDY SAVAGE:
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YOU OR BREAK YOU**

**Randy Savage
vs. Harley Race**



12

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INSIDE

Wrestling

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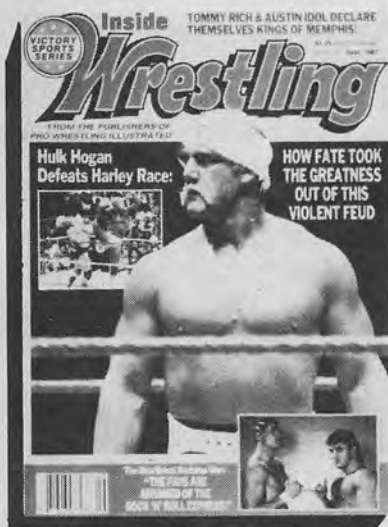
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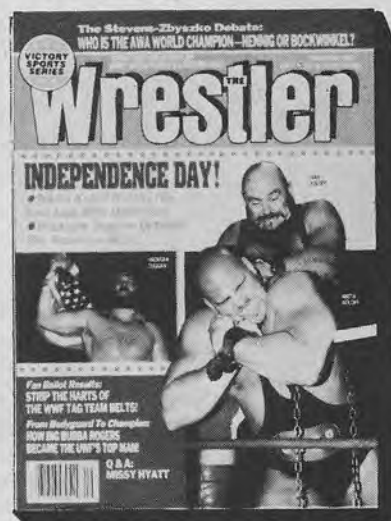
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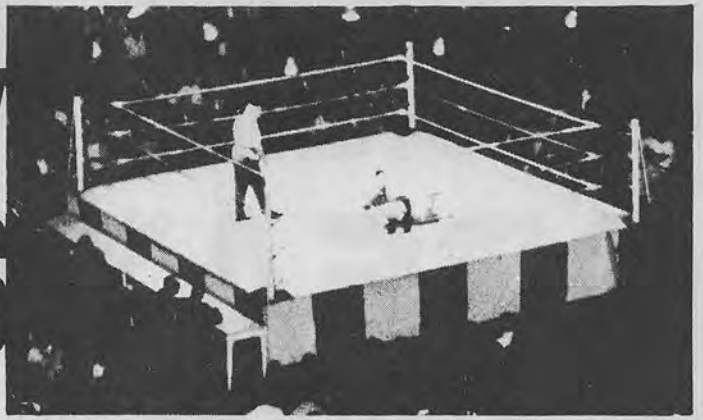
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WORLD CLASS DEFENSE

I am writing in response to a letter written by Kevin Brands ("World No Class," September 1987). Mr. Brands said that the Brian Adias-Kevin Von Erich feud would have never happened if the Von Erichs had given Adias a title match. Mr. Brands also said that World Class is a "minor promotion"

that "pulled out of the NWA so the Von Erichs would have a version of a world title."

I disagree with you strongly, Mr. Brands. Adias would have been given his title shot if he asked Kevin Von Erich for one. As for your claim that World Class is a minor promotion, World Class has had the Von Erichs,

The Freebirds, Chris Adams, Hercules Hernandez, Junkyard Dog, Bruiser Brody, King Kong Bundy, Big John Studd, Jake Roberts, Ric Flair, Rick Rude, Tony Atlas, Jim Garvin, Abdullah the Butcher, The Missing Link, Bam Bam Bigelow, and many other great wrestlers. World Class has great wrestlers today.

Also, I agree with you that Chris Adams was a great champion, but he was stripped of the belt for failing to defend his title against Black Bart. Kevin won the belt not with the help of his father, but by his own wrestling skill and talent. Furthermore, the Von Erichs have beaten Flair and Rude on many occasions. Kerry won the NWA World title from Flair.

I'm glad World Class pulled out of the NWA because who would want a World champion like Ric Flair that cheated and protected his belt by getting himself disqualified? Also, the Von Erichs do not stab their friends in the back! The Von Erichs have repeatedly said that they are willing to wrestle *anyone*.

DARRIN BUTLAND
Verbank, NY

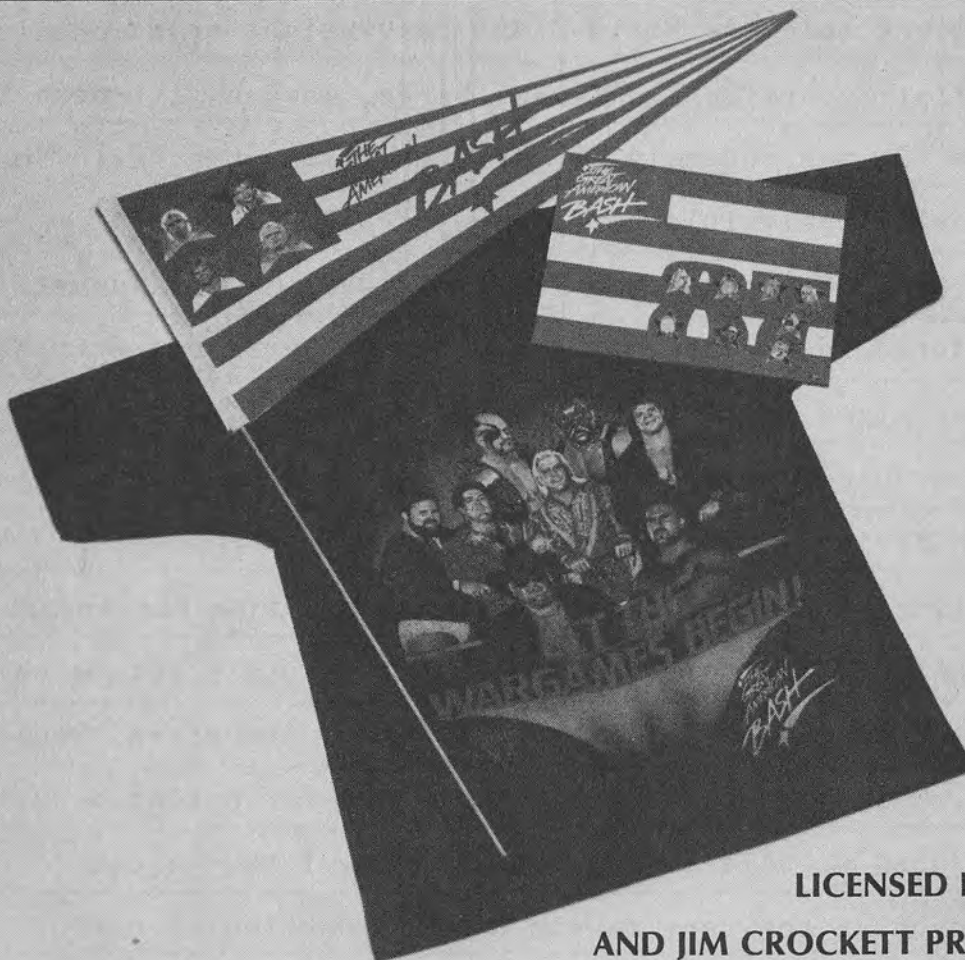
MATCHES INTERRUPTUS

I'm fed up with the UWF and NWA. They save the main events for the end of their TV shows. Who cares if One Man Gang can destroy Mike Boyette? If the show starts at 10 o'clock, the main event will start at 10:57. They won't even conclude the match! Several weeks ago, Hawk shoved Ric Flair, then Tony Schiavone said in a surprised voice, "Oh no, we
(Continued on page 48)



Kevin Von Erich chinlocks Brian Adias. In Darrin Butland's opinion, Von Erich didn't deny anyone a shot at the World Class title when he held it. He also writes that World Class is a much better promotion than it's given credit for.

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Saks

Editor-in-Chief

Al Perez might hold the World Class heavyweight championship, but confusion definitely reigns in Texas. Perez, as you will read in our story on page 42, was recently declared champion when Kevin Von Erich was deemed physically ineligible to defend his title.

Four days prior to that scheduled title defense, on August 17, Von Erich was injured in the neck by Brian Adias. Kevin was examined by a doctor and was given an okay to make the August 21 title defense. The doctor was overruled, however, by the World Class medical advisory board that included Kevin's father, Fritz Von Erich.

In its ruling, the board felt that Kevin's injury was enough to keep him out of action for a full week, and that he would not be able to wrestle until that period was over. The title, therefore, would have to be forfeited. While I commend the World Class for having a ruling body that bars injured wrestlers from competition, I have a couple of questions regarding the very makeup of this particular board.

First, how can a medical advisory board exist without a representative from the medical profession? Being that Kevin passed a medical examination and the board ruled him ineligible afterward, it appears that the board is presuming to know more than the doctor. Second, how can Fritz Von Erich rule on a case involving his own son? It's a blatant conflict of interest that can serve no purpose but to open himself and his son to innumerable charges. I'd like to believe that Fritz was acting in the best interests of his son, but there are those who believe that those interests were best served by Kevin not wrestling the dangerous Perez on that night.

The idea of a medical advisory board is a good one. It might even save a life one day. In its present form, however, this board is a crock!

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TOP SECRET

Behind the Dressing Room Door

by **David
Rosenbaum**

THE OLD SAYING goes: "Fool me once, shame on you. Fool me twice, shame on me." Now Paul Orndorff is trying to fool us for a third time, and if you go along with his act you should be condemned to a lifetime of Dusty Wolff vs. S.D. Jones main events with Demolition vs. Paul Roma and Jim Powers on the undercard.

The Paul Orndorff-Sir Oliver Humperdink marriage that was consummated on a recent edition of *Superstars Of Wrestling* is doomed to divorce if only because these two men don't know what direction in which they're going. The only way they'll ever stay together is if their inevitable switch back to being rulebreakers occurs at the same time. Given the volatile nature of the sport, that's not entirely impossible.

Orndorff, of course, is a monumental egotist. Always has been, always will be. Anybody who calls himself "Mr. Wonderful"—and believes it— isn't exactly looking at things objectively. They say that time heals all wounds, but has enough time passed for the fans to forget what Orndorff did to his former tag team partner, Hulk Hogan? Wrestling fans are generally very forgiving, but they tend to draw the line when somebody stabs "The Hulkster" in the back.

That happened in the summer of 1986. During a televised tag team match against "Big" John Studd and King Kong Bundy, Orndorff piledrived Hogan and was joined in the ring by his new pals, Bundy, Studd, and Bobby Heenan. Hogan was shocked and hurt, although any fan with two eyes saw it coming from a mile away. This so-called "shocking" turn had been brewing for weeks,

(Continued on page 54)



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A QUICK QUIZ: Which tag team combination has held the WWF World tag team belts the longest in the decade of the 1980s?

If you answered The British Bulldogs, you're right—but only if you're reading this prior to November 15, 1987. If it happens to be the 15th or later, and The Hart Foundation still have the belts, then Brett "The Hitman" Hart and Jim "The Anvil" Neidhart are not only the champions of WWF tag teams, but the champions of WWF tag team *longevity*.

For my money (and I'm writing this in late August, so there are still three months to go), I think Hart and Neidhart can do it.

In the '80s, only two teams (as of August) have compiled WWF tag team reigns of nine months or more: The British Bulldogs and Dick Murdoch and Adrian Adonis.

In the case of the Bulldogs, they held the belts for nine months and 19 days, having defeated Brutus Beefcake and Greg Valentine on April 7, 1986, and holding the belts until being unseated by the Harts on January 26, 1987.

Murdoch and Adonis held the WWF tag team belts for four days over nine months, from April 17, 1984, until January 21, 1985. They defeated Rocky Johnson and Tony Atlas for the championship, and were downed by Barry Windham and Mike Rotundo.

(In case you're wondering, Chief Jay and Jules Strongbow hold the record for the *shortest* WWF tag team reign in the '80s: 15 days, stretching from June 28 through July 13 of 1982. Mr. Fuji and Mr. Saito were their opponents as they won and lost the belts.)

Anyway, back to the Harts.

Sometimes it's difficult to give a team like The Hart Foundation credit. They have the talent, but they're guided by Jimmy Hart, a man for whom it's virtually impossible to direct any admiration. Hart and Neidhart both have remarkable wrestling skills, but all too often it seems that Jimmy's only skill is to bash opponents in the head with his megaphone.



Jim Neidhart covers Raymond Rougeau

In my opinion, Hart and Neidhart could win their matches without Jimmy's megaphone-bashing. They might have to work a little harder in a few cases, but the respect their title reign would receive would certainly more than make up for it.

ON THE ROAD

with
CRAIG PETERS

And it's not as if Hart and Neidhart have been ducking challengers. They've given Dynamite Kid and Davey Boy Smith more than their share of rematches, and have defended their belts vigorously against such combinations as Samoan Sika and Kamala, Jacques and Raymond Rougeau, Rick Martel and Tito Santana, and The Killer Bees.

"Are you crazy?" you may be asking. "Don't you see Jimmy Hart's interference in all those title defenses?"

Yes, I do. But I also see a tag team that is excellent *in spite* of Hart's megaphone, not because of it. I think Hart and Neidhart are simply a little bit lazy right now. They're wrestling at, maybe, 70 percent of their capabilities, secure in the knowledge that if they get into some sort of trouble, "The Mouth of the South" will be right there to bail them out and save the title.

I'd like to see Jimmy Hart leave his megaphone in the dressing room when the Harts wrestle. I don't think the Foundation needs that kind of help in the first place. And in the second place, Jimmy's megaphone tactics can backfire.

Like they did in Montreal on August 10.

In that match, The Hart Foundation was defending the championship against Jacques and Raymond Rougeau in The Montreal Forum. The arena was packed, with nearly 20,000 screaming fans firmly behind the efforts of the hometown Rougeaus.

In the middle of a heated exchange between the teams, Jimmy Hart climbed onto the ring apron to hit Raymond Rougeau with his megaphone. Raymond ducked, and Hart hit Brett Hart with his megaphone. Brett crumpled to the mat and Raymond covered him for the pin—and the championship!

Almost.

The following day, WWF President Jack Tunney's office released the following statement:

"Last night at The Montreal Forum, the Rougeau brothers won the World tag team belts from The Hart Foundation. After reviewing tapes at the request of The Hart Foundation, I conclude that Raymond Rougeau used a foreign object; furthermore he was not the legal man in the ring. It was a difficult decision, but as President I had no choice but to return the belts to the Harts."

Foreign object question aside (Rougeau was caught holding Hart's megaphone), The Hart Foundation was *extremely* lucky that Raymond was not the legal man in the ring. The megaphone tactic backfired, and it very nearly cost them the belts.

No matter how you feel about Jimmy Hart, you've got to admire the skills of Hart's aerial attack and Neidhart's brawling, not to mention their sensational teamwork. If Jimmy can curb his interference, the Harts can easily remain champions for a long, long time.

November 15 or bust!

□

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NAMES MAKI



OLIVER HUMPERDINK

Sir Oliver Humperdink has taken the WWF by storm since moving over from the Florida area in August. First, Humperdink claimed **Paul Orndorff** from manager **Bobby Heenan**. But Humperdink scored the biggest coup of his career just days later by signing to a contract the much sought-after **Bam Bam Bigelow**.

The announcement was made at the August 26 WWF TV tapings in Fresno, California, after it appeared that **Slick** would be Bigelow's manager. Slick came on for an interview with **Nikolai Volkoff** boasting that all the other managers had been eliminated and that the 368-pound tattooed Bigelow would join his crew. Suddenly, Bigelow ran onto the interview set and said to Slick, "How can you say you're my manager when you're not?" Bigelow then introduced Humperdink and floored Slick. Later in the evening, Bigelow destroyed Volkoff in a challenge match.

With Orndorff and Bigelow, Humperdink has two men in his camp with rulebreaking histories. And although

it's impossible to say what direction they'll go in, it's obvious that "The House of Humperdink" has quickly become a sturdy fortress in the WWF.

At press time, we were just days away from a much-anticipated match at the Minneapolis Auditorium pitting AWA World tag team champions **Boris Zukhov** and **Soldat Ustinov** against the number-one contenders **D.J. Peterson** and **Wahoo McDaniel**. Peterson and McDaniel have already defeated their archrivals in a double Russian chain match, and have scored several non-title victories as well. "There's no stopping us now," said Peterson. "We've beaten them before, and we have no intentions of walking away from this one empty." McDaniel is a former NWA World tag team champion with Jay Youngblood, and a former AWA World tag team champ with **Crusher**; Peterson has never held a major title.

Tennessee champion **Doug Furnas**, truly a mountain of a man, is feuding with **Tony Anthony** in the Continental area . . . Down in the Mid-Southern area, **The Nasty Boys** have



DOUG FURNAS

turned good and are feuding with AWA Southern tag team champions **Pat Tanaka** and **Paul Diamond** . . . **The Hunters** currently hold both the WWC and North American tag team belts in Puerto Rico . . . **Brian Adias** has a Japanese man named **Ninja Master** in his corner. Ninja Master supposedly taught Adias the "Oriental Tool" that he used to injure **Kevin Von Erich**.

Johnny Ace, flag carrier for the Florida tag team champs **The Shepherders**, was kidnapped! **Blackjack Mulligan** and **Bugsy McGraw** grabbed Ace during a TV interview, tossed him into Mulligan's pickup



JOHNNY ACE

truck, and drove away. He was brought back to the arena a few nights later and managed to escape. But as he ran away, **Kevin Sullivan** pulled up in a car, grabbed Ace, and kidnapped him again. Sullivan, Mulligan, and McGraw are demanding \$5,000 for the return of Ace and negotiations are in progress. **Butch Miller** and **Luke Williams** are hoping to get Ace back by other means, and so far have not called in the FBI. Because Miller and Williams are from New Zealand, how-

N' NEWS

Bill Apter
reporting...

ever, this case might eventually land in the International Court of Justice. We'll see.

NWA President **Bob Geigel**, a 60-year-old veteran of the sport, is back in action again! Apparently, **Rip Rogers** disagreed with a ruling Geigel made in Kansas City. Rogers and his paid assassin, **Abdullah the Butcher**, then attacked Geigel, who was finally aided by **Mike George**. Later, George and Geigel signed to wrestle Rogers and Abdullah on August 20 at the Municipal Auditorium in Kansas City. In that match, both teams were disqualified for fighting outside the ring. "I realize that as NWA President I shouldn't be wrestling, but a man's gotta do what a man's gotta do," said Geigel. "I wasn't just gonna take what they did lying down. I must protect my authority."

Brickhouse Brown is no longer wrestling in the Mid-Southern area. He's in charge of "The Commission,"



BRICKHOUSE BROWN



TED DiBIASE

which includes **Don Bass**, **Superstar Bubba**, and **Iceman Parsons**. Brown is a former AWA Southern champ . . . **Earthquake Ferris** broke several of Central States champion **Rufus R. Jones'** ribs. No word on Jones' condition . . . **Ted DiBiase**, an outstanding scientific wrestler now in the WWF, is using the spinning toe-hold as his finishing maneuver . . . **The Mighty Yankees** are a new masked rulebreaking team in the Florida area. Nobody knows who they really are . . . As of September 19, the UWF's TV show will appear on WPIX-TV, a superstation out of New York City. The tentative air time is noon on Saturdays.

World Class referee **Rick Hazzard** has retired from officiating to become a wrestler. "I'm gonna get revenge on **Cowboy Tony**," said Hazzard, who suffered a leg injury at the hands of Tony while officiating a match. Believe it or not, Tony was mad because

Hazzard awarded him the victory in a match against **Rick Casey**. "I wanted to beat the stuffings out of Casey," said Tony, "and I wasn't finished yet!"

The feud between NWA World champion **Ric Flair** and top contender **Ronnie Garvin** is heating up and might culminate with a match at Starrcade '87 on Thanksgiving. Ronnie has gotten the best of Flair, who has been a raving lunatic on TV interviews



GARVIN VS. FLAIR

lately. "Nobody makes a fool out of 'The Nature Boy' without paying the price. and Garvin's got some paying to do," screamed Flair. "Him and his damn brother have me going out of my mind, and this ain't gonna stop until I've finished both of them off! They think they can play games with me but that's not the way it is." For more details on this incredible feud, check out the January 1988 issue of *Pro Wrestling Illustrated*, on sale shortly.

That's all for now, fans! See you at the matches! □

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November 1982/Stories include: Flair, Snuka, Piper, Blair.

December 1982/Stories include: Snuka, Rich, Kamala, Junkyard Dog.

January 1983/Stories include: Putski, Muraco, Windham, Bockwinkel.

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August 1983/Stories include: Valentine, Blanchard, Windham, Street.

September 1983/Stories include: Hogan, Ellering, Von Erich, Briscos.

October 1983/Stories include: Race, Sawyer, Briscos, Bass.

November 1983/Stories include: Rhodes, Santana, Von Erichs, Kabuki.

December 1983/Stories include: Mascaras, Superstar, Von Erich, Zbyszko.

January 1984/Stories include: Valentine, Hogan, Von Erich, Road Warriors.

March 1984/Stories include: Santana, Hogan, Von Erich, Sawyers.

April 1984/Stories include: Hogan, Ellering, Von Erich, Rhodes.

May 1984/Stories include: Windham, Brody, Road Warriors, Junkyard Dog.

June 1984/Stories include: Von Erich, Billy Jack, Flair, Armstrong.

July 1984/Stories include: Rich, Billy Jack, Valiant, Von Erich.

August 1984/Stories include: Garvin, Sullivan, Freebirds, Street.

September 1984/Stories include: Von Erich, Piper, Steamboat, Billy Jack.

October 1984/Stories include: Flair, Rhodes, Magnum T.A., Bundy.

November 1984/Stories include: Billy Jack, Von Erich, Piper, Brody.

December 1984/Stories include: Martel, Santana, Von Erich, Steamboat.

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November 1986/Stories include: R&R Express, Hogan-Orndorff, Von Erich.

December 1986/Stories include: Flair, Bockwinkel, Hogan, Gilbert, Nikita.

January 1987/Stories include: Heenan, Garvins, DiBiase, Borne & Sawyer.

February 1987/Stories include: Magnum T.A., Gordy, Steamboat-Roberts.

March 1987/Stories include: Windham, Nikita, Adias, Savage-Steamboat.

May 1987/Stories include: Flair-Nikita, Andre-Hogan, UWF, Windham, Hennig.

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September 1984/Stories include: Martel, Brody, Von Erich, Iron Sheik.

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November 1984/Stories include: Rhodes, Rich, Hernandez, Warriors.

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January 1985/Stories include: Magnum T.A., Rhodes, Atlas, Von Erich.

February 1985/Stories include: Rich, Adams, Valiant, Flair.

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THE

INSIDER

By Eddie Ellner

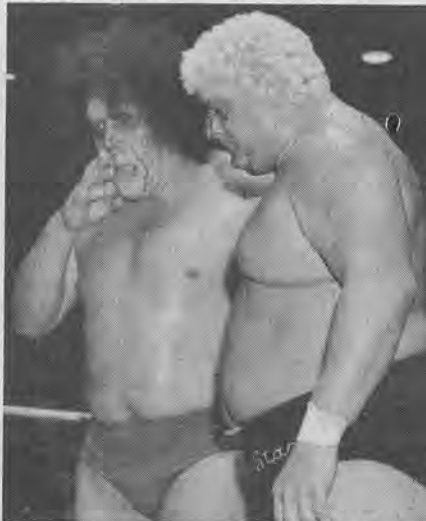
[The opinions expressed in "The Insider" are those of Eddie Ellner alone, and do not necessarily represent the opinions of anyone else on the staff of this magazine.]

NEWS ITEM: The Giant Idiot Contest Concludes.

"If there is such a creature on this planet that is more hideous than Andre the Giant, then I am going to commit suicide." Attribute that to pragmatic Eric Bates of Lakewood, California, who is *not* the winner of the Giant Idiot contest. To see who is the winner, look below.

NEWS ITEM: Dusty Rhodes' Popularity Expands.

I'd like to make it public record that in the "Giant Idiot" contest, in which readers were asked to select and/or create a creature uglier than Andre the Giant, Dusty Rhodes has collected more votes than that of his two closest competitors (Adrian Adonis and Abdullah the Butcher) combined. Although I'd previously urged readers not to use Dusty, the man's overwhelming repulsiveness won out in the end. Fans of this column know a monstrosity when they see one, and they refuse to be silent. Since Dusty's ego approximates Dusty's waistline, he should rejoice in the knowledge that he has been named the winner of the Giant Idiot contest. This is not a slight to the thousands of fans who entered the contest. To select one



The nearest equivalent to Andre the Giant is Dusty Rhodes, in the opinion of hundreds of respondents to Eddie Ellner's "Giant Idiot" contest.

winner proved impossible. Reading my mail has never been an enjoyable experience; these past three months have been an exception. I thank you.

Selecting a prize for Dusty Rhodes proved difficult. Why would a man of such enormous breeding and obvious class need my lousy 10 bucks? That would barely keep his feedbag full for half an hour. Just the anticipation of the deliciously malicious entries I received tempts me to run another contest. Would you readers be so kind, say, for a *Pro Wrestling Illustrated* T-shirt, to assist me? To be recognized as the most grotesque combatant in professional wrestling is no small achievement. What should we award Dusty? What gift is appropriate for the man hailed by wrestling fans as the Ugliest Thing On The Face Of The Earth? Help me.

Mail suggestions to: "I Love Dusty," c/o *Inside Wrestling*, Box 48, Rockville Centre, NY, 11571.

Remember: this is no ordinary mortal. This is the human equivalent to the Loch Ness Monster.

NEWS ITEM: Ellner Resigns Ratings Committee.

The blurb at the top of each of our ratings pages says: "Blah, blah, blah. These ratings are compiled by the magazine's editorial board, and blah, blah, blah." Emphasis on *blah*.

I would like to announce my resignation from the revered ratings committee. As far as I'm concerned, they reflect the capriciousness of a power-hungry staff. They possess no continuity or logic. I mean, you have Barry Windham rated *ahead* of Nikita Koloff in the Top 10, but *behind* him in the NWA? "Because in that case, because Nikita was U.S. champion, he is automatically the number-one contender for the NWA crown," Bill Apter explains. He's always got an explanation; usually a ridiculous one. I say a pox on Bill Apter, Barry Windham, Nikita Koloff, and the entire ratings system.

After tremendous lip service is paid to won/lost records, quality of opposition, and other objective criteria, the ratings boil down to one thing, snuck into the blurb in vague editorial doublespeak: "the inherent skill of each wrestler or team."

Who decides these "inherent"
(Continued on page 64)

THE VIDEOTAPE EVENT OF THE YEAR!



Slant-Eyed Slaughter

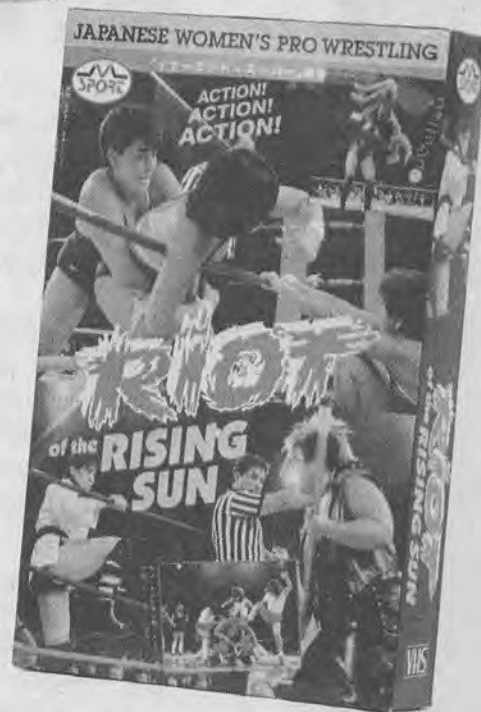
(running time: approximately 70 minutes)

- Wendi Richter & "Devil" Masami vs. Ayumi "Jumbo" Hori & Okumura
- Nancy Kumi vs. Lucy Kayama
- Monster Ripper & "Devil" Masami vs. Ayumi "Jumbo" Hori & Mimi Hagiwara
- "Jaguar" Rimi Yokota vs. Tarantula
- "Crush Girl" Lioness Asuka vs. "Crush Girl" Chigusa Nagayo

You've heard about them . . . you've read about them . . . now you can see them for yourself! Japanese women wrestlers are among the most agile, athletic, acrobatic—and vicious—competitors in the entire mat world. Now, two sensational videotapes bring the dynamic action of Japanese women's wrestling into your own home!

Sample The Excitement!

Jaguar Yokota, The Crush Girls, Devil Masami, The Jumping Bomb Angels, Dump Matsumoto—these are the legends of Japanese women's wrestling. They're all here, and more—including American superstar Wendi Richter. These matches, direct from Japanese television, include the kind of action that, until now, only satellite dish owners or Japanese fans could enjoy. These tapes are certain to become valued collectors' items. They include *complete* matches, not match excerpts!



Riot Of The Rising Sun

(running time: approximately 70 minutes)

- Yukari Omori & Ayumi "Jumbo" Hori vs. Noriyo Taten & Itysuki Yamasaki—"The Jumping Bomb Angels"
- Masked You & Kaoru "Dump" Matsumoto vs. Lioness Asuka & Chigusa Nagayo—"The Crush Girls"
- "Jaguar" Rimi Yokota vs. Las Galactia
- "Jaguar" Rimi Yokota vs. "Devil" Masami

Special Magazine Offer:

In the past, you might have expected to spend upwards of \$59.95, \$69.95, or more for tapes of this quality. But now, for a limited time only, you can order **Slant-Eyed Slaughter** and **Riot Of The Rising Sun** for the special low price of only \$29.95 each (plus \$3.00 postage and handling). Witness all the excitement and thrills of Japanese women's wrestling—in your own home.

SPECIAL NOTE: These tapes, distributed by Powersports Video in association with American Video, are being sold exclusively for a limited time only in the United States by T.V. Sports. Both tapes include English play-by-play commentary recorded alongside the original Japanese commentary and crowd noise. While the English commentary is poor, the action level and match quality of these bouts more than makes up for it. We're convinced you'll be *completely* satisfied by these programs.

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☐ **Riot Of The Rising Sun**
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A—ON— ASSIGNMENT

BY LIZ HUNTER

I COOKED MYSELF a fine meal: veal scallopini, fettucini alfredo, fresh cauliflower. Drank a bottle of excellent Long Island Pindar blush wine. Went to sleep groggy. And I had a dream . . .

. . . Tired of his North Carolina mansion, his helicopters, and \$1,000 dinners, Jim Cornette thought it would be fun to invite some wrestlers and myself on a three-day adventure up the Amazon River.

Besides Cornette and myself, the passenger manifest includes The Midnight Express, Lex Luger, Tully Blanchard, J.J. Dillon, Arn Anderson, Abdullah the Butcher, and Ric Flair. Abdullah, conversant in several native Amazonian tongues—thus the reason for his invite—is berthed next to the engine room.

Why am I here? The invitation, hand-delivered to our New York office, was hard to decline. It was an opportunity to observe the entire rulebreaking staff of the NWA uncharacteristically relaxed. Perhaps they'd reveal a particular insight into the mechanics of their personalities. Editor-in-Chief Stu Saks encouraged me to go, although Bill Apter pointed out I'd be the only woman on board. "Wouldn't that be, er, awkward?" he asked, concerned for my safety. I had to laugh. I'd been battling discrimination since I was nine. This trip would be a breeze.

There is no breeze in the 105-degree heat and I think I might die. Since Cornette's chartered Boeing 747 touched down in Ma-



Ric Flair grabs the ropes for leverage as Brad Armstrong tries to escape from the figure-four leglock. Flair was in a bizarre dream that Liz Hunter had about an imaginary cruise down the Amazon, courtesy of Jim Cornette.

naus, I have gradually wilted. The rulebreakers, as one might expect, cannot take the heat either and are holed up in the air-conditioned dining room playing cards. Abdullah seems to thrive in this weather. He sits on deck grabbing bugs as big as birds and stuffs them in his mouth.

I watch the men play gin rummy, four against four. I am an expert, having played the game my whole life, and watch for who will be the first to cheat. After an hour it becomes obvious that these are eight of the most honest card players in the world. I am surprised but somewhat enchanted by the dichotomy. Later, I ask Dillon about this. "My dear girl," he says indignantly. "Me cheat? My colleagues cheat? How unscrupulous! Whatever would prompt such an accusation?"

That night Flair and Blanchard, in exchange for a flashlight and a portable tape deck, attempt to smuggle two native girls on board. Their midnight sojourn goes awry when the tribal chieftain discovers their intentions. Suddenly they are surrounded by an entire village of angry tribesmen brandishing spears and blowguns. We watch from the ship as Flair and Blanchard are redressed in some indistinguishable language.

"Let's go down there and kick some butt," Luger cries, not the least intimidated by razor-sharp spears. The captain looks worried. "Flair committed a serious breach of ethics," he says. I think: Why should a thousand miles down the Amazon be any different than a ring in Charlotte?

Our entire contingent watches
(Continued on page 52)

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- ★ KILLER KOWALSKI
- ★ LOU THESZ

LOS ANGELES NOVEMBER 14-15, 1987

Ambassador Hotel
3400 Wilshire Blvd.
Los Angeles, California

TENTATIVE IN-PERSON GUESTS:

- ★ LOU ALBANO
- ★ IVAN PUTSKI
- ★ OX BAKER
- ★ VICTOR RIVERA
- ★ DR. JERRY GRAHAM
- ★ RED BASTIEN
- and many more! —

WASHINGTON, DC NOVEMBER 21-22, 1987

Stouffer's Concourse Hotel
2399 Jefferson Davis Hwy.
Arlington, Virginia

TENTATIVE IN-PERSON GUESTS

- ★ BRUNO SAMMARTINO
- ★ KILLER KOWALSKI
- ★ BARON SCICLUNA
- ★ THE NIGHAWK
- ★ TONY ATLAS
- ★ WENDI RICHTER
- ★ OX BAKER
- and many more! —

PHILADELPHIA JANUARY 16-17, 1988

Holiday Inn
1800 Market Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

TENTATIVE IN-PERSON GUESTS

- ★ BRUNO SAMMARTINO
- ★ LARRY SHARPE
- ★ BULLDOG BROWER
- ★ DOMINIC DENUCCI
- ★ KILLER KOWALSKI
- ★ E.W.A. STARS
- and many more! —

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NEWS FROM THE

If you would like your area of the country represented in these reports, while also being officially credited with your own by-line, send us reports of the matches you attend. You will have the thrill of seeing your name in an internationally known magazine while at the same time helping to improve the quality of wrestling in your area. So why not give it a try? You will be glad you did!

Send your reports to: Correspondent Editor, Box 48, Rockville Centre, N.Y. 11571

TAMPA, FL By Daniel L. Willis



**MIKE ROTUNDO
vs.
TERRY FUNK**



Both men traded forearm blows, armbars, and leglocks until Rotundo whipped Funk across the ring, used the airplane spin, and covered him for the pin. But as referee Bill Alfonso counted, Dory Funk Jr. ran to the ring, saved his brother, and Rotundo found himself double-teamed. As both men savaged Rotundo, Kevin Sullivan tripped Terry and chaos ensued, with Sullivan and Rotundo eventually cleaning house. Rotundo was finally awarded the decision by disqualification.

OTHER BOUTS: The Cuban Connection and the Shepherders battled to a no-decision in a Florida tag team title match ... Mike Graham beat The Spartan ... Dory Funk Jr. defeated Jerry Gray ... The Samurai Warriors beat Sam Bass & Crusher Knarf ... Kevin Sullivan destroyed Rex King.

SASKATOON, CANADA By Peter Ryan



**BRUISER BRODY
vs.
DAVID SHULTZ**



Bruiser Brody gained an early advantage by kicking Shultz in the face and pummeling him with kicks and punches. Brody caught Shultz with a low blow that sent him down to the mat, then delivered a thunderous legdrop and went for the pin. Shultz kicked out at the two-count and took the fight outside the ring, slamming Brody with a chair. Brody used a chair of his own, and both men were counted out.

OTHER BOUTS: Bill Ash and "The Karate Man" wrestled to a 15-minute draw ... The Mountain Man beat Mike Sundance & Johnny Rodz ... Wendi Richter retained her NWF women's title against Sheena ... D.C. Drake defeated Kenny Pisserello to retain his NWF title.

SYRACUSE, NY By Mike Savona



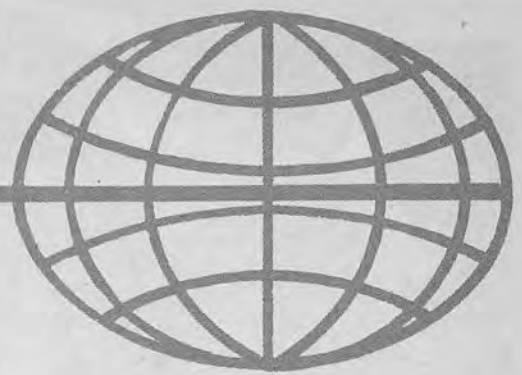
**HILLBILLY JIM
vs.
KING KONG BUNDY**



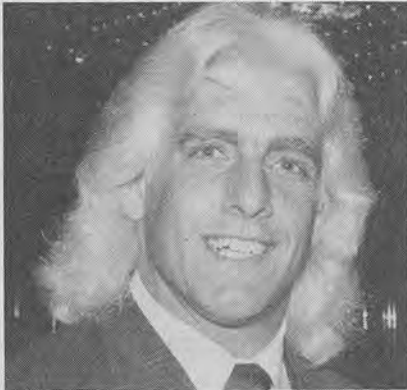
Hillbilly Jim had midget star Little Beaver in his corner for this bout. Bundy easily repulsed Jim's attacks until Little Beaver charged in and gave Bundy a kick to the thigh, giving Jim the upper hand. Hillbilly missed with an elbow as Bundy rolled out of the way and recovered, then executed a bone-crushing bodyslam and elbowsmash, and covered Hillbilly for the victory.

OTHER BOUTS: Randy Savage won a 14-man battle royal ... George "The Animal" Steele defeated Danny Davis by countout ... Jim Brunzell & Pedro Morales beat The Hart Foundation by DQ ... Lanny Poffo pinned Brady Boone ... The Jumping Bomb Angels defeated Lelani Kai & Judy Martin ... S.D. Jones pinned Tiger Chung Lee.

WRESTLING CAPITALS



BALTIMORE, MD By Chris M. Dodson



RIC FLAIR
vs.
RONNIE GARVIN



Flair's vendetta against the Garvin brothers continued in full force as he defended his belt against "the man with the hands of stone." The advantage switched back and forth several times as both men exchanged chops and punches. When Garvin weakened, Flair tried the figure-four leglock, which Garvin reversed. Flair escaped and the brawl resumed, with Garvin knocking out the champion and pinning him—after the time limit had expired.

OTHER BOUTS: The Road Warriors defeated Ivan Koloff & Konga the Barbarian ... Michael Hayes & Terry Gordy beat Manny Fernandez & Shaska Whatley ... Sting defeated Eddie Gilbert via DQ ... Jimmy Valiant beat The Angel of Death ... Lazor-Tron beat Nelson Royal ... Steve Cox beat Thunderfoot I.

LITTLE ROCK, AK By Debra Nixon



STEVE WILLIAMS
vs.
DICK MURDOCH



In this barbed-wire cage match, Williams drew first blood when he rubbed Murdoch's face into the sharp fence. Eddie Gilbert came to the ring and handed Murdoch an iron spike that he used to pound Williams' head. But when Gilbert ran into the cage with a chair, the referee tried to prevent his interference, giving Williams time to recover. The UWF champion then rallied to pin Murdoch and retain his title.

OTHER BOUTS: Shaska Whatley pinned Shane Douglas by using the ropes ... Gary Young lost by DQ when he threw Steve Cox over the top rope ... Davey Haskins beat Enforcer I ... Barry Windham easily beat The Terminator in a Western States title defense.

TACOMA, WA by David Jacobsen



HULK HOGAN
vs.
RANDY SAVAGE



The match started off fast as both men locked up in battle still wearing their ring attire. Savage came off the rope with a series of six axhandles and elbow-smashes that sent Hogan sprawling out of the ring. As Savage was about to hit Hogan with a chair, Elizabeth pulled it away from him. While Savage argued with Elizabeth, Hogan attacked from behind, rolled Savage back into the ring, and went on to score the pin.

OTHER BOUTS: Billy Jack Haynes beat Hercules Hernandez in a chain match ... Ken Patera defeated Paul Orndorff ... Koko B. Ware pinned Danny Davis ... Judy Martin & Lelani Kai defeated the Jumping Bomb Angels ... Butch Reed beat Scott Casey.

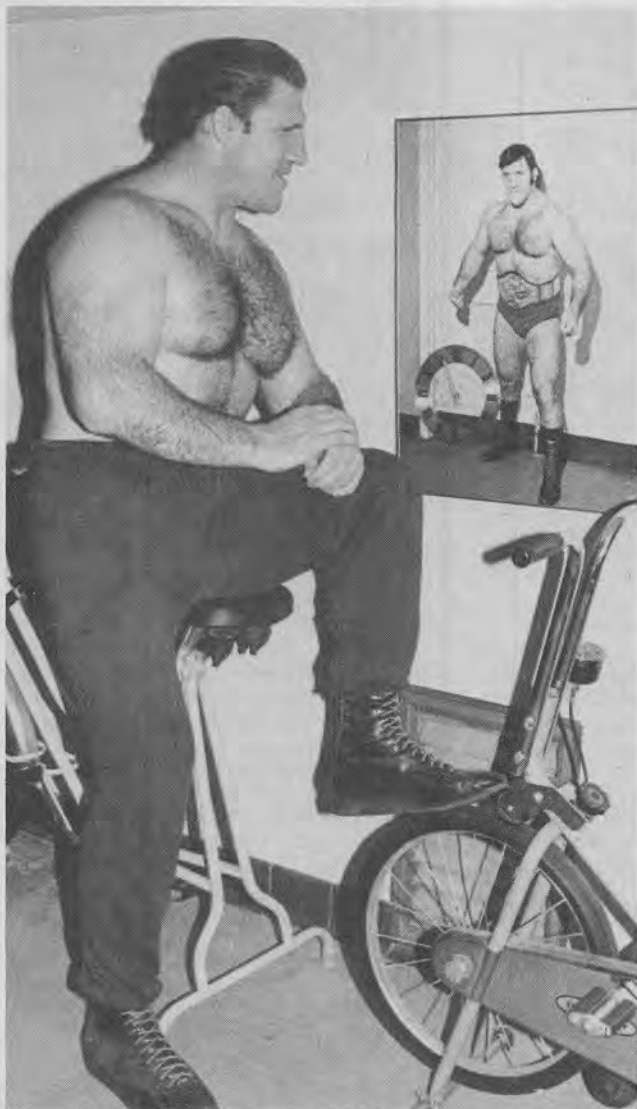


Matt Brock's PLAIN SPEAKING

BOSTON, MA: Bruno is back? Wrong. Bruno isn't back; he never left. "The Living Legend" we're seeing now isn't displaying quite the excellence of his former self, but he's still a heck of a lot better than most of these other pretenders walking around wearing wrestling tights. He could still teach Hulk Hogan

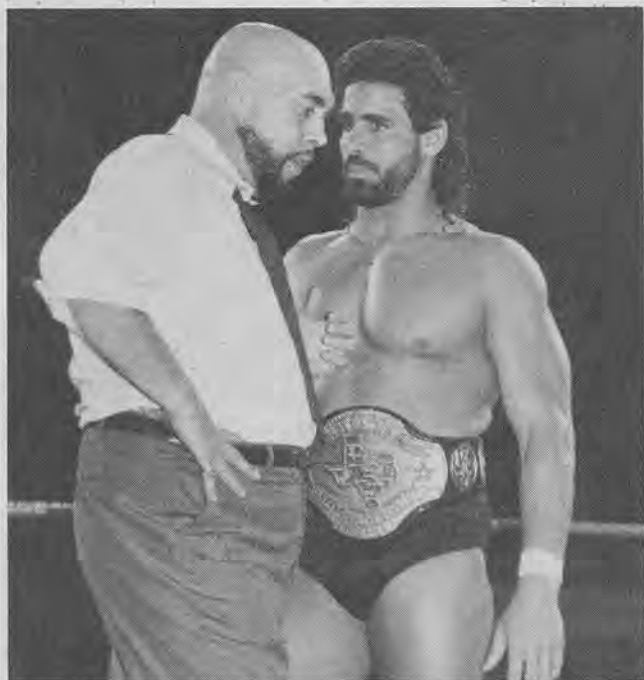
a lesson or two about scientific wrestling, stamina, and guts. That's right, *guts*, because while Hogan looks pretty impressive flexing his muscles, he'd still fail any gut test against Sammartino. Bruno is one of the greatest athletes of all time, and if there was ever any doubt, he's back to prove it all over again. This time, his goal is a bit less lofty than the WWF World championship, but you'd better believe that if Bruno somehow wins the Intercontinental strap from The Honky Tonk Man, the news is gonna be heard around the world, just like Bobby Thomson's famous blast. The incredible thing is that Bruno claims he doesn't want any part of the Intercontinental title, but he might not have a choice. He pinned Honky Tonk here to finish off a six-man elimination match, and by the crowd's ovation you'd have thought the Red Sox just won the World Series. This man continues to prove that he's the greatest that ever lived. Hulk Hogan can do whatever he wants, but he'll never match Sammartino.

DALLAS, TX: A return to Texas seems to always be filled with dread. This is the land of wrestling disasters, courtesy of the Von Erich family. They made the news again recently—seems as if father Fritz is suing the doctor that treated Mike Von Erich's toxic shock syndrome—but they're also making the news in a good way. World Class wrestling is experiencing a resurgence of sorts and drew over 4,000 fans to a recent card in nearby Mesquite. I'm not sure why this is happening, but I have an idea that it might have something to do with Al Perez, a 27-year-old sleeper who's gone virtually unnoticed during his career. Let me tell you something, the writers that cover wrestling try to do the best job possible (although some of them are hacks), but it's impossible to keep an eye on *every* wrestler in the world. It can't be done. Basically, Perez has gone unnoticed because he's not flashy. He's a scientific wrestler, familiar to Texas fans of the old Southwest promo-



BRUNO SAMMARTINO

Harder than nails, veteran wrestling reporter Matt Brock has logged more miles covering wrestling than any other journalist. Every month Matt will travel to the sport's hotbeds, reporting everything he sees without fear or favor



GARY HART & AL PEREZ

tion, and has also wrestled in the UWF. He was recently scouted in Puerto Rico by Gary Hart. Hart is known for his talent expeditions, and this was one of his better finds. Perez made an immediate impact in the World Class area, but, if you ask me, he was denied the opportunity to prove his ability. He won the World Class title from Kevin Von Erich by default here on August 21, but if he had a chance to wrestle, the fans would have seen something special. He was definitely ready to beat Von Erich, and now will have to prove himself all over again. If you ask me, Kevin was hiding from Perez. He hasn't been 100 percent in a long time and wanted to save himself the embarrassment of losing.

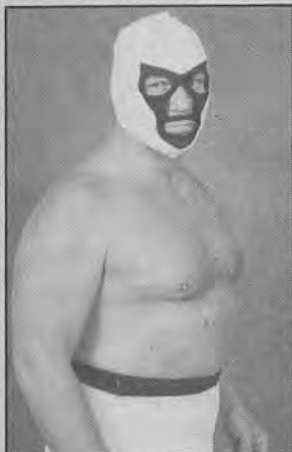
CHICAGO, IL: I saw what Dave Rosenbaum wrote about me in the December 1987 *Pro Wrestling Illustrated*, and I'm just glad that I was able to make an impact on a young writer. The way I see it, I'm not here to write flashy prose or win any awards. I'm here to do my job; if I can retain a low profile, that's fine. But if Rosenbaum wants to make me his hero, that's fine, too. I've gotta admit it, Brock has a few heroes; role models, if you will. Gordon Solie

is one. Paul Boesch is another. Both men made news recently for different reasons: Boesch retired after 55 years as a promoter in Houston. Solie terminated his relationship with Championship Wrestling From Florida after a 37-year marriage, but will remain with Continental Championship Wrestling and will continue to co-host the syndicated *Pro Wrestling This Week* with Joe Pedicino. Boesch was a legend down in Texas and was highly respected by dozens of wrestlers and countless fans. Some of them—wrestlers and fans alike—were scheduled to be back in Houston on August 28 to honor this great man. As for Solie, his voice, style, and integrity have also become legendary. This man is a great journalist and a great human being. Both men have done more for professional wrestling than any five other men I know. Boesch's retirement is a great loss to the sport, but it's certainly a well-earned rest. The man has worked hard. Solie will always be in demand, and leaving one job shouldn't affect him at all. As long as there's wrestling, there'll be Gordon Solie. People who don't give a damn about wrestling know about Solie. That's something nobody can dispute.

STAMFORD, CT: The news coming out of WWF headquarters here is that federation head Vince McMahon Jr. instituted periodic mandatory drug testing for all wrestlers. It was only a matter of time before the druggies got around to my beloved sport, too. They can't do this. Wrestling is as American as apple pie. It's part of our heritage, something the pushers and drug addicts shouldn't be allowed to infiltrate. Mind you, I'm not against the drug testing. Unfortunately, it's a necessary evil. But what has happened to our country? Are the inmates *really* taking over the asylum? I always knew that drugs were a problem in society, but never did I think it would touch wrestling. Maybe good ol' Matt is a little too naive. I always thought athletes were different. Sometimes I think our society is going down the drain. Soon everybody's gonna be walking around sky-high on dope and there's nothing you or I can do about it. It's time to put an end to this insanity. Now! □

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Do you have a favorite wrestler who has left your area? Are you wondering where he is today? Then this special column is just for you. Each month we will update the whereabouts of four current or former wrestlers



MR. WRESTLING II

After failing to land any title shots in the Continental area, the popular masked man has decided to wrestle only on a part-time basis while pursuing personal business opportunities in areas outside the mat sport. He also has been

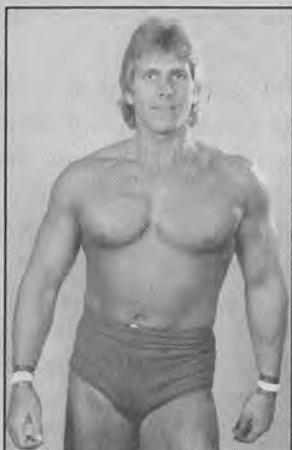
asked to coach and advise several wrestlers in the Continental area and is contemplating those offers at this time. "I'm trying to spend more time with my family," Wrestling II said from his home in Atlanta.



THE DESTROYER

The Destroyer, one of wrestling's original masked men, lives comfortably with his family in Syracuse, New York. Although a veteran, Destroyer still wrestles in Japan several times a year (he is a former multi-title-holder there) and

makes goodwill appearances every few months at WWF and NWA shows in upstate New York and in Canada. He is currently training several New York State rookies for their professional debuts.



LANCE VON ERICH

The good-looking young wrestler is now calling himself "The Amazing Lance" and trying to make his mark in the new Wild West Wrestling Federation, operating mainly out of the Dallas-Ft. Worth area. Iceman

King Parsons is also in Wild West now and the two men have renewed their feud from the World Class area. Lance says that his goal still is to win a world championship, but he first wants to get rid of Parsons.



DARK JOURNEY

The beautiful former executive secretary for Tully Blanchard has left professional wrestling entirely and invested in a catering business in California with a friend. Dark Journey, who also managed several wrestlers in the UWF,

did not feel challenged by her secretarial role with Blanchard. "She went from managing and guiding wrestlers' careers to just being a valet for Blanchard," said a source. "That wasn't for her."

INSIDE WRESTLING

137

CAPSULE PROFILE

A REMARKABLY PROFICIENT and versatile scientific wrestler, AWA World champion Curt Hennig is one of the few practitioners of the sweet science who is hated by the fans (*"They're just too stupid to recognize greatness"*) ... The 6'3", 235-pound native of Elk River, Minnesota, is the son of the great Larry Hennig (*"I'm just a chip off the old block, although I can only hope to be as great as my old man"*) ... Had hoped to play college football, but a knee injury in his sophomore year of high school set him back (*"That's the greatest thing that ever happened to pro wrestling. They got me!"*) ... Immediately decided to follow in his father's footsteps and became a professional wrestler (*"Wrestling is in the Hennig blood"*) ... Trained for his pro career at Verne Gagne's training camp (*"Verne is the hardest taskmaster I've ever met, but his son is a wimp"*) ... Turned pro in 1980 and defeated Bill Howard at the St. Paul Civic Center in his debut (*"The fans went nuts. I mean, the place was packed and they gave me cheers like I never heard before"*) ... Teamed with his father from time to time as "The Ax Attack" (*"A dream come true to wrestle with him. We had a great time"*) ... Teamed with Scott Hall and won the AWA World tag team title from Jim Garvin and

CURT HENNIG

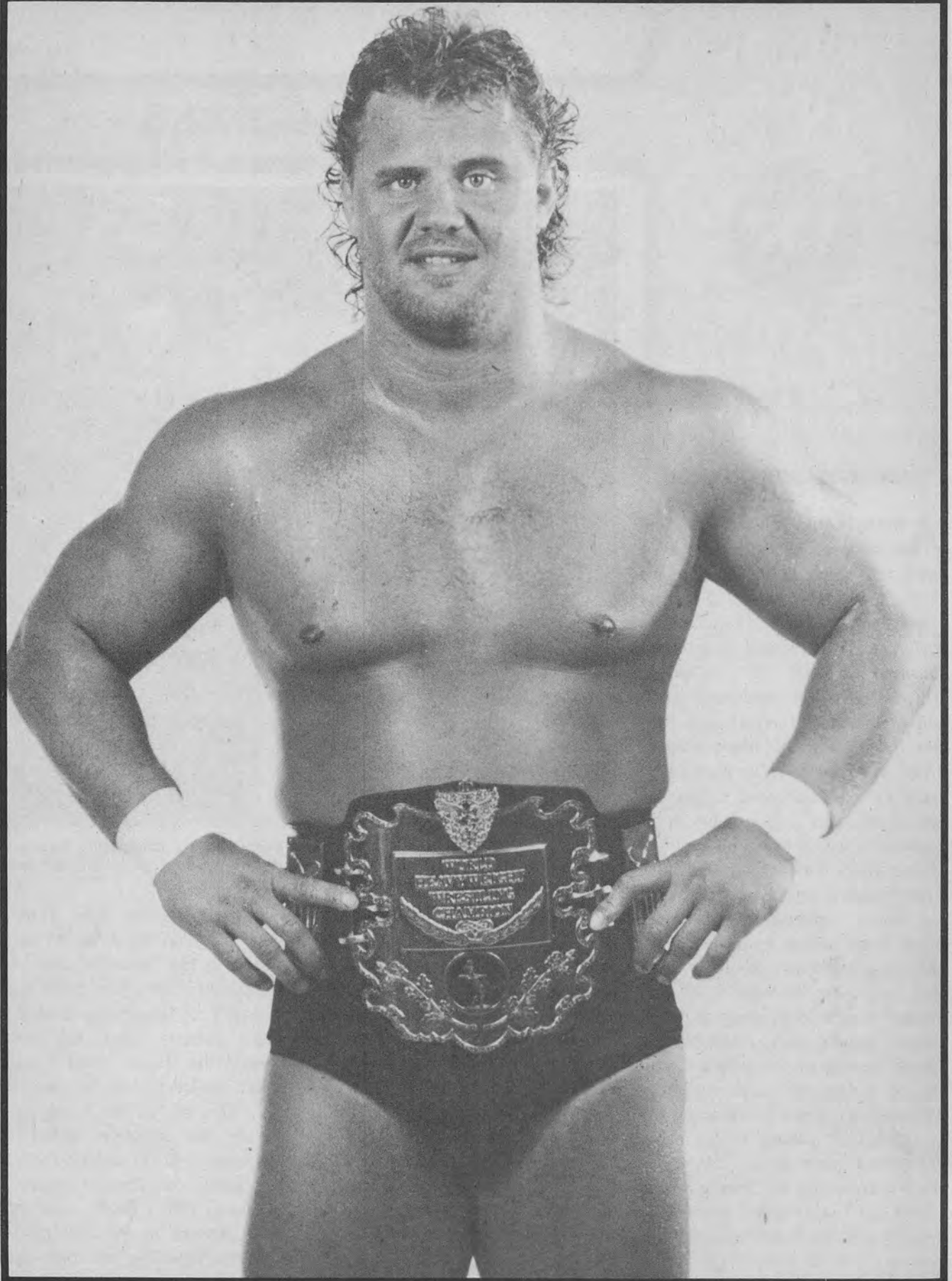


AWA World champion Curt Hennig slams Nick Bockwinkel, the former titlist. Although he won the belt from Bockwinkel under controversial circumstances, it cannot be denied that Hennig is one of the best scientific wrestlers in the sport.

Steve Regal on January 18, 1986, in a 58-minute match (*"At the time, that was the greatest moment of my career. Scott was a good partner"*) ... Lost the belts to Buddy Rose and Doug Somers four months later by countout (*"Whoever heard of losing a belt by countout? We were robbed blind!"*) ... Ever since then, Hennig hasn't been the same (*"I learned the hard way that a man has to watch out for himself, because nobody else will"*) ... Started teaming with Greg Gagne, but their partnership was stormy from the outset (*"Gagne always wanted to do things the fair way, and that's not the way you get things done"*) ... The two had words during a tag team match, which led to their eventual

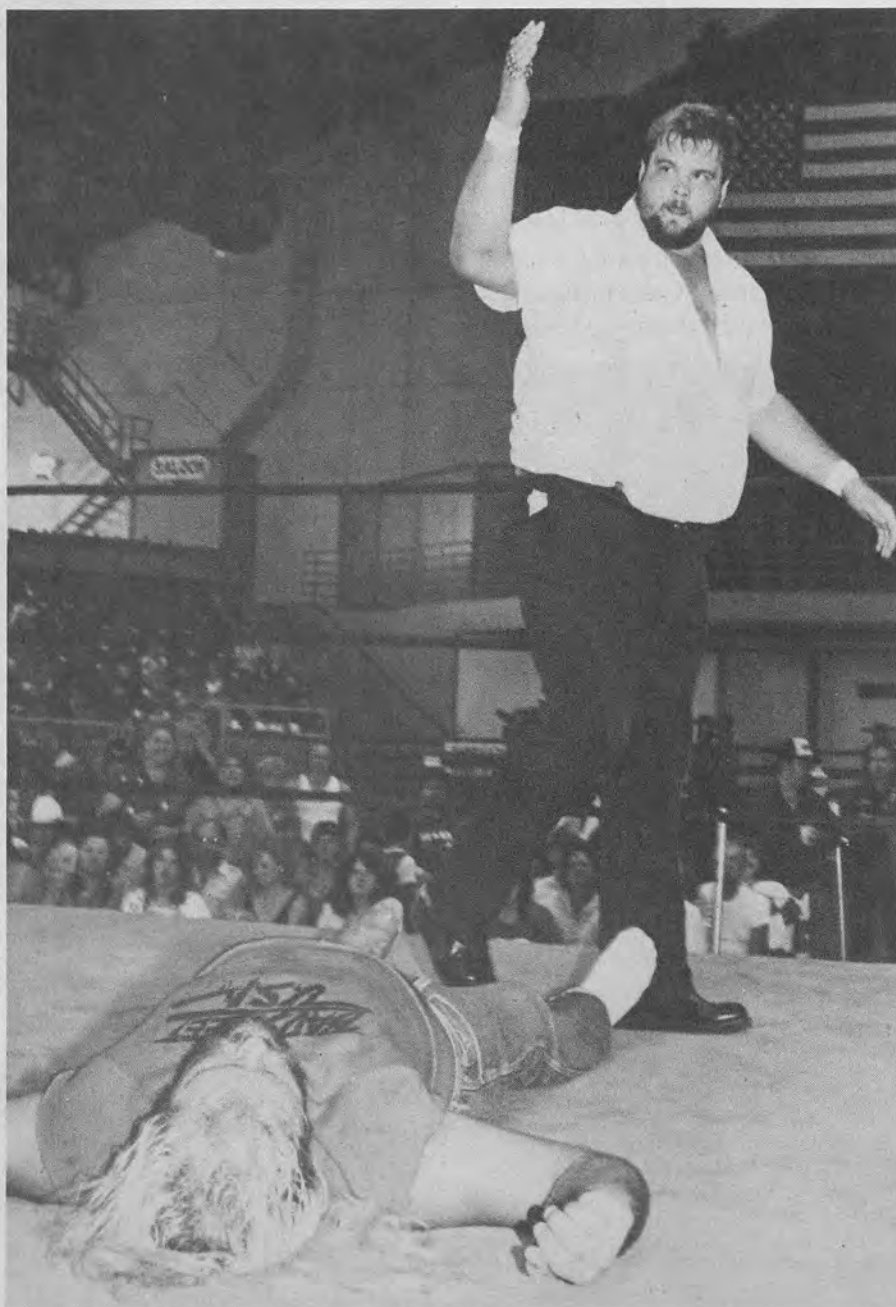
split (*"His loss, my gain. It set me free"*) ... Won the AWA World title on May 2, 1987, when he pinned Nick Bockwinkel (*"The cream finally rose to the top"*) ... Controversy around that match brewed when Ray Stevens claimed that Hennig used a foreign object handed to him by Larry Zbyszko (*"Lies, all lies, which was proven out by the videotape replays"*) ... AWA review board decided there was no evidence that Zbyszko illegally aided Hennig (*"They finally made up for what they did to me and Hall"*) ... Currently defending the belt against Bockwinkel, Gagne, Jerry Lawler, and others (*"I've dedicated my title reign to my father. I'll have the belt forever!"*) □

CAPSULE PROFILE PINUP



CURT HENNIG

MICHAEL HAYES WILL NEVER TAKE BUBBA ROGERS LIGHTLY AGAIN



Ignorance is bliss, but arrogance can be deadly—as Michael Hayes found out during his recent series of matches against Big Bubba Rogers. The outspoken Freebird was lucky to get out of the ring alive after these terrifying confrontations

BADSTREET IS FREEBIRD territory. This mythical thoroughfare of terror that snakes through arenas around the country has wreaked more than its share of havoc on those helpless souls that have made the deadly mistake of stepping into the ring against Michael Hayes, Terry Gordy, and Buddy Roberts. But when Hayes took a solo cruise down Badstreet recently, he found himself looking around for help, only to find that none of his buddies were home.

"You see, Bubba hasn't been in a good mood since he lost the belt to [Steve] Williams," said Gen. Skandor Akbar, manager of former UWF

Big Bubba Rogers leaves Freebird Michael Hayes beaten in the center of the ring—"mugged," as it were. Hayes thought that Bubba would be a pushover.

champion Big Bubba Rogers, following a match against Hayes at the Cowtown Coliseum in Ft. Worth, Texas. "He seems to think that everybody's out to get him, and I'm not about to tell him otherwise. Why should I? When he's in a destructive mood, Bubba is the most devastating force in professional wrestling, a worthy member of Devastation Inc."

Indeed, Hayes quickly discovered that his cockiness and his worldwide reputation as a wrestling machine will get him nowhere against a man who couldn't care less about "Freebird Fantasia." Bubba Rogers is on a lifelong search-and-destroy mission.

"The guy's crazy," said Hayes after another whipping at the hands of Rogers. "The UWF asked me if I was interested in wrestling a series of matches against Rogers and I figured, 'Heck, why not? The guy's a fat tub!' Let me tell ya, something, though, he's an insane fat tub and he don't give a crap *who* he hurts. Man, he's almost as tough as The Freebirds!"

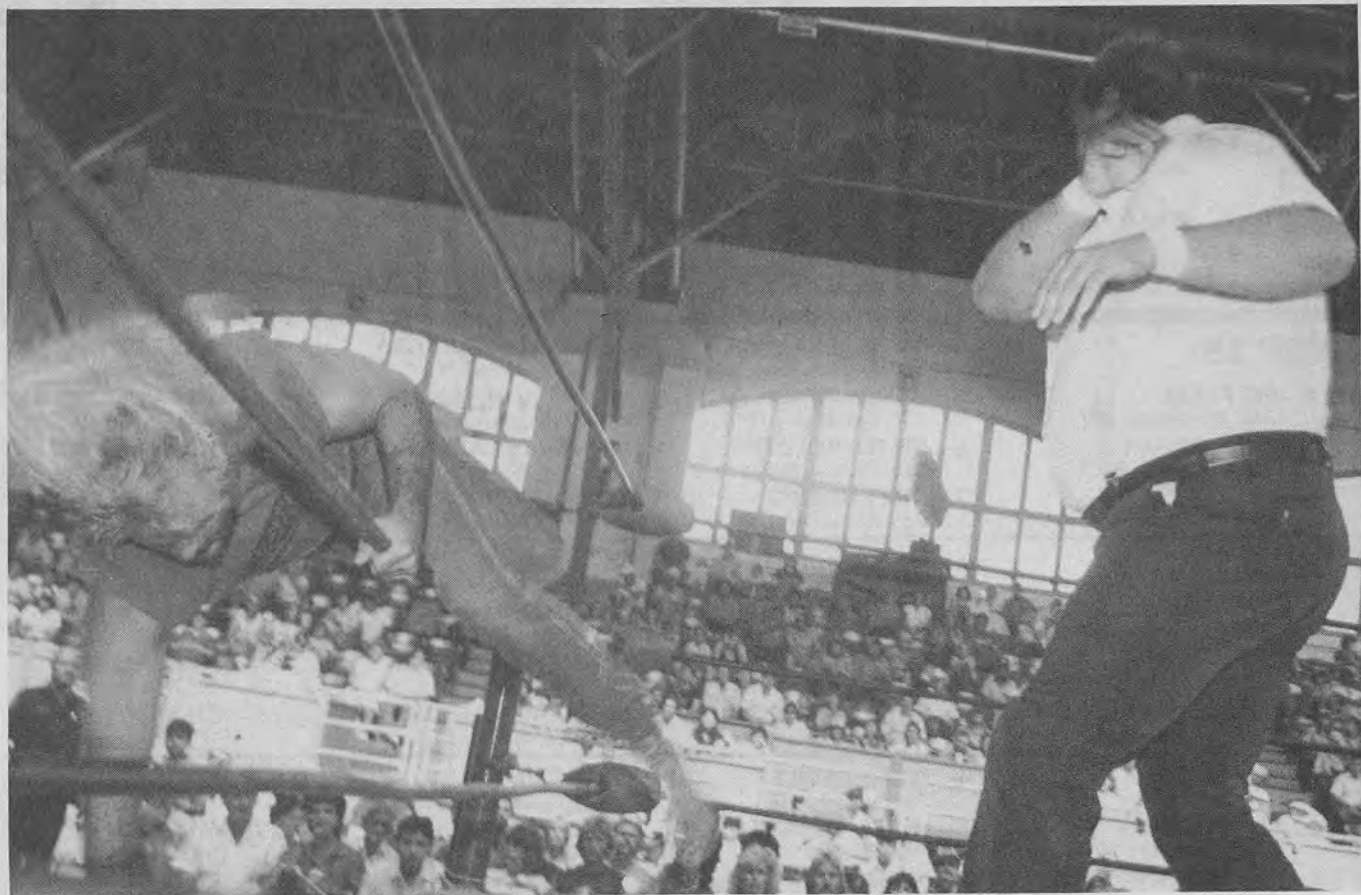
That's a mighty high compliment coming from the most prominent member of The Freebirds. Hayes' devil-may-care attitude has become legendary in the sport. Who else would publicly criticize the president of a major federation just weeks after signing a million-dollar contract with that same individual? Who else would run into the ring and plant a healthy kiss on the sensuous lips of his former archenemy, Dark Journey, and not worry about the impending slap in the face? He may have become a favorite with the fans, but he's still the same old Michael Hayes.

But if there's one reason why The Freebirds are now fan favorites, it's Skandor Akbar. The ruthless General went to great lengths to prove that there are bad guys and there are villains; that there are rulebreakers and there are *rulebreakers*. There are The Freebirds and there is Devastation Inc. It's like comparing shoplifters to Middle East terrorists. When Devastation Inc. threatened to take

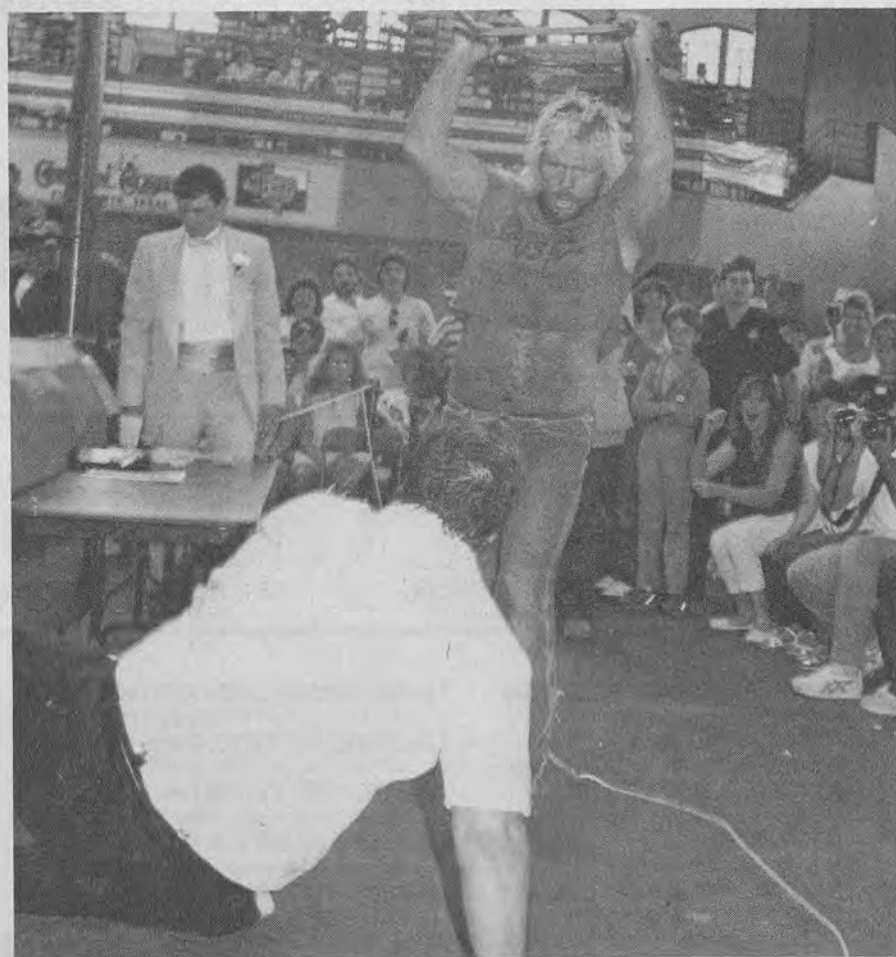


Rogers chokes Hayes with a chain (above) and punches him into the timekeeper's table, as his manager, Gen. Skandor Akbar, looks on (below). Rogers has become tougher and meaner since losing the UWF title, a fact that pleases Akbar immensely.





Bubba throws Hayes through the ropes (above), but the Freebird retaliates with a chair (below). The feud between The Freebirds and Akbar's Devastation Inc. has become much more intense as a result of the Hayes-Rogers encounters.



over the UWF, The Freebirds uncharacteristically came to the rescue.

The turning point in this battle came last April, when Rogers was Jim Cornette's bodyguard in the NWA and Akbar was looking for a new man to replace UWF champion One Man Gang. Akbar swiped Rogers from Cornette for an undisclosed amount of cash and things haven't been the same since. Rogers shocked the world by defeating Gang for the belt, then Akbar shocked Gang when he announced he was Big Bubba's manager.

When Rogers finally lost the title to Williams on July 11 in Oklahoma City, there was hell to pay in the loser's dressing room. "It was the most incredible scene I've ever seen," said locker room attendant Jim Barbanell. "Rogers was throwing chairs around the room and crushing glasses with his bare hands. All the while, Akbar just sat in a corner and smiled. He didn't care that Rogers had just lost the title. He knew that Bubba was about to start kicking some serious butt."

(Continued on page 62)

INSIDE WRESTLING'S OFFICIAL RATINGS

TOP 15

- 1—**RIC FLAIR**
243, Minneapolis, MN
- 2—**HULK HOGAN**
305, Venice Beach, CA
- 3—**LEX LUGER**
268, Chicago, IL

- 4—**STEVE WILLIAMS**
265, Norman, OK
- 5—**BARRY WINDHAM**
236, Sweetwater, TX
- 6—**NIKITA KOLOFF**
275, Moscow, Russia
- 7—**CURT HENNIG**
235, Minneapolis, MN

- 8—**RANDY SAVAGE**
245, Sarasota, FL
- 9—**MIKE ROTUNDO**
245, Syracuse, NY
- 10—**JERRY LAWLER**
234, Memphis, TN
- 11—**BRUISER BRODY**
284, Albuquerque, NM

- 12—**AL PEREZ**
238, Tampa, FL
- 13—**TULLY BLANCHARD**
235, San Antonio, TX
- 14—**WENDELL COOLEY**
220, Milton, FL
- 15—**THE HONKY TONK MAN**
255, Memphis, TN

NWA

- 1—**RIC FLAIR**
243, Minneapolis, MN
- 2—**LEX LUGER**
268, Chicago, IL
- 3—**RONNIE GARVIN**
231, Montreal, Quebec

- 4—**NIKITA KOLOFF**
275, Moscow, Russia
- 5—**DUSTY RHODES**
302, Austin, TX
- 6—**TULLY BLANCHARD**
235, San Antonio, TX
- 7—**BARRY WINDHAM**
236, Sweetwater, TX

- 8—**MIKE ROTUNDO**
245, Syracuse, NY
- 9—**JIM GARVIN**
235, Tampa, FL
- 10—**KEVIN SULLIVAN**
252, Boston, MA
- 11—**HERCULES AYALA**
260, San Juan, PR

- 12—**MICHAEL HAYES**
255, Atlanta, GA
- 13—**DORY FUNK JR.**
240, Amarillo, TX
- 14—**MIKE MILLER**
265, New Orleans, LA
- 15—**RUFUS R. JONES**
287, Boston, MA

AWA

- 1—**CURT HENNIG**
235, Minneapolis, MN
- 2—**NICK BOCKWINKEL**
245, Beverly Hills, CA
- 3—**GREG GAGNE**
220, Robbinsdale, MN

- 4—**JERRY LAWLER**
234, Memphis, TN
- 5—**LARRY ZBYSZKO**
248, Pittsburgh, PA
- 6—**TOMMY RICH**
242, Hendersonville, TN
- 7—**WAHOO McDANIEL**
260, Midland, TX

- 8—**KEVIN KELLY**
271, Oakland, CA
- 9—**D.J. PETERSEN**
245, St. Joseph, MO
- 10—**ADRIAN ADONIS**
312, New York, NY
- 11—**DON BASS**
230, Memphis, TN

- 12—**JEFF JARRETT**
200, Hendersonville, TN
- 13—**BORIS ZUKHOV**
254, Leningrad, Russia
- 14—**JERRY BLACKWELL**
474, Stone Mountain, GA
- 15—**GEORGE BARNES**
225, Melbourne, Australia

WWF

- 1—**HULK HOGAN**
305, Venice Beach, CA
- 2—**THE HONKY TONK MAN**
255, Memphis, TN
- 3—**RANDY SAVAGE**
245, Sarasota, FL

- 4—**ONE MAN GANG**
468, Chicago, IL
- 5—**RICK STEAMBOAT**
238, Honolulu, HI
- 6—**KILLER KHAN**
248, Mongolia
- 7—**HARLEY RACE**
258, Kansas City, MO

- 8—**HERCULES HERNANDEZ**
265, Tampa, FL
- 9—**PAUL ORNDORFF**
253, Brandon, FL
- 10—**BAM BAM BIGELOW**
368, Mt. Laurel, NJ
- 11—**RICK RUDE**
246, Robbinsdale, MN

- 12—**BRUTUS BEEFCAKE**
273, San Francisco, CA
- 13—**TED DIBIASE**
247, Omaha, NB
- 14—**SUPERSTAR GRAHAM**
260, Paradise Valley, AZ
- 15—**BRUNO SAMMARTINO**
242, Pittsburgh, PA

MOST POPULAR

- 1—**HULK HOGAN**
305, Venice Beach, CA
- 2—**DUSTY RHODES**
302, Austin, TX
- 3—**NIKITA KOLOFF**
275, Moscow, Russia

- 4—**STEVE WILLIAMS**
265, Norman, OK
- 5—**RICK STEAMBOAT**
238, Honolulu, HI
- 6—**BARRY WINDHAM**
236, Sweetwater, TX
- 7—**CHRIS ADAMS**
228, Stratford on Avon, England

- 8—**KOKO B. WARE**
229, Union City, TN
- 9—**KEVIN VON ERICH**
239, Denton, TX
- 10—**JERRY LAWLER**
234, Memphis, TN
- 11—**JIM GARVIN**
235, Tampa, FL

- 12—**MIKE ROTUNDO**
245, Syracuse, NY
- 13—**BILLY JACK HAYNES**
245, Portland, OR
- 14—**WENDELL COOLEY**
220, Milton, FL
- 15—**BRUNO SAMMARTINO**
242, Pittsburgh, PA

MOST HATED

- 1—**RIC FLAIR**
243, Minneapolis, MN
- 2—**THE HONKY TONK MAN**
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- 3—**LEX LUGER**
268, Chicago, IL

- 4—**TULLY BLANCHARD**
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- 9—**ONE MAN GANG**
468, Chicago, IL
- 10—**AL PEREZ**
238, Tampa, FL
- 11—**DORY FUNK JR.**
240, Amarillo, TX

- 12—**EDDIE GILBERT**
222, Lexington, TN
- 13—**KEVIN KELLY**
271, Oakland, CA
- 14—**RICK RUDE**
246, Robbinsdale, MN
- 15—**BIG BUBBA ROGERS**
348, Louisville, KY

TAG TEAMS

- 1—**THE ROAD WARRIORS**
No. 2 contenders NWA World tag team title
- 2—**BRETT HART & JIM NEIDHART**
WWF World tag team champions
- 3—**THE ROCK 'N' ROLL EXPRESS**
NWA World tag team champions
- 4—**BOBBY EATON & STAN LANE**
U.S. tag team champions
- 5—**THE ROUGEAU BROTHERS**
No. 1 contenders to WWF tag team title

- 6—**TULLY BLANCHARD & ARN ANDERSON**
No. 3 contenders to NWA tag team title
- 7—**THE BRITISH BULLDOGS**
No. 2 contenders to WWF World tag team title
- 8—**TIM HORNER & BRAD ARMSTRONG**
UWF tag team champions
- 9—**THE SHEPHERDERS**
Florida tag team champions
- 10—**WAHOO McDANIEL & D.J. PETERSON**
No. 1 contenders to AWA tag team title

- 11—**DINO BRAVO & GREG VALENTINE**
No. 3 contenders to WWF tag team title
- 12—**BORIS ZUKHOV & SOLDAT USTINOV**
AWA World tag team champions
- 13—**ERIC EMBRY & FRANK LANCASTER**
World Class tag team champions
- 14—**ROBERT FULLER & JIMMY GOLDEN**
Southeast Continental tag team champions
- 15—**BRUCE HART & BRIAN PILLMAN**
Calgary International tag team champions

These ratings are compiled by the editors with the assistance of promoters, wrestlers, and reporters around the country, and are based on won-lost records for the past month, quality of opposition, and the inherent skill of each wrestler . . . "Most Popular" and "Most Hated" ratings are based on nationwide surveys of wrestling fans and on mail that comes to our offices . . . Championships marked with asterisks on the "Roll Call of Champions" indicate title changes that have taken place since our previous issue . . . The information under the championship listing indicates the date that champion won the title, who the former champion was, and where the match took place .

For period ended August 27, 1987

ROLL CALL OF CHAMPIONS

- ALABAMA CHAMPION: THE BULLET**
(June 22, 1987; from Mike Golden; Birmingham, AL)
- * **ALL-JAPAN ASIAN TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: TAKASHI ISHIKAWA & MIGHTY INOUE**
(July 30, 1987; tournament final over Isamu Teranishi & Masanobu Kurosu; Tokyo, Japan)
- ALL-JAPAN INTERNATIONAL CHAMPION: JUMBO TSURUTA**
(October 21, 1986; from Stan Hansen; Tokyo)
- ALL-JAPAN INTERNATIONAL TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: THE ROAD WARRIORS**
(March 12, 1987; from Jumbo Tsuruta & Genichiro Tenryu; Tokyo, Japan)
- ALL-JAPAN JUNIOR HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: MASANOBU FUCHI**
(January 3, 1987; from Kuniaki Kobayashi; Tokyo)
- ALL-JAPAN UNITED NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP: GENICHIRO TENRYU**
(April 26, 1986; tournament final over Ted DiBiase; Omiya, Japan)
- ALL-PACIFIC WOMEN'S CHAMPION: LELANI KAI**
(August 21, 1986; from Chika; Tokyo, Japan)
- * **AWA INTERNATIONAL CHAMPION: GEROGE BARNES**
(August 25, 1987; from Bill Dundee; Louisville, KY)
- AWA INTERNATIONAL TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: ROCKY JOHNSON & BILL DUNDEE**
(July 6, 1987; from Pat Tanaka & Paul Diamond; Memphis, TN)
- * **AWA SOUTHERN CHAMPION: DON BASS**
(August 3, 1987; from Jerry Lawler; Memphis, TN)
- * **AWA SOUTHERN TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: PAT TANAKA & PAUL DIAMOND**
(August 2, 1987; from Jeff Jarrett & Billy Travis; Jackson, TN)
- AWA WORLD CHAMPION: CURT HENNIG**
(May 2, 1987; from Nick Bockwinkel; San Francisco, CA)
- AWA WORLD TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: BORIS ZUKHOV & SOLDAT USTINOV**
(May 25, 1987; from The Midnight Rockers; Lake Tahoe, NV)
- BAHAMAS CHAMPION: TITLE VACANT**
(most recently held by Bad News Allen)
- * **BRITISH COMMONWEALTH CHAMPION: GAMA SINGH**
(August 7, 1987; from Owen Hart; Calgary, Alberta)
- CANADIAN INTERNATIONAL CHAMPION: ABDULLAH THE BUTCHER**
(February 22, 1987; from Hercules Ayala; Montreal, Quebec)
- CANADIAN TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: PRETTY BOY SIMMES & RICHARD CHARLANE**
(April 13, 1987; from Dan Kroffat & Armand Rougeau; Montreal, Quebec)
- CENTRAL STATES CHAMPION: RUFUS R. JONES**
(July 17, 1987; from Bob Brown; Kansas City, KS)
- * **CENTRAL STATES TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: BRAD & BART BATTEN**
(August 6, 1987; result of special stipulation match victory of Brad Batten over Bobby Jagers; Kansas City, KS)
- ENGLISH MIDDLEWEIGHT CHAMPION: FLYING FUJI YAMATA**
(March 3, 1987; from The Black Tiger; Croydon, England)
- FLORIDA CHAMPION: MIKE ROTUNDO**
(April 18, 1987; over Sir Oliver Humperdink; Lakeland, FL)
- FLORIDA TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: THE SHEPHERDERS**
(June 23, 1987; from Steve Keirn & Mike Graham; Tampa, FL)
- INTERNATIONAL WRESTLING GRAND PRIX CHAMPION: ANTONIO INOKI**
(June 19, 1986; tournament final over Dick Murdoch; Tokyo, Japan)
- IWGP INTERNATIONAL TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: AKIRA MAEDA & NOBUHIKO TAKADA**
(March 26, 1987; from Keiji Mutoh & Shiro Koshinaka; Osaka, Japan)
- * **IWGP JUNIOR HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: KUNIAKI KOBAYASHI**
(August 20, 1987; tournament final over Nobuhiko Takada; Tokyo, Japan)
- JAPANESE WOMEN'S CHAMPION: YUKARI OMORI**
(August 23, 1986; from Devil Masami; Kawasaki, Japan)
- JAPANESE WOMEN'S TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: KZUE NAGAHORI & UMY MIOGURA**
(April 27, 1987; from Yumiko Hotta & Hisako Uno; Tokyo, Japan)
- MID-AMERICA HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: JEFF JARRETT**
(May 11, 1987; from Moondog Spot; Memphis, TN)
- NWA JUNIOR HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: LAZOR-TRON**
(March 7, 1987; from Denny Brown; Atlanta, GA)
- NWA SIX-MAN TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: THE ROAD WARRIORS & DUSTY RHODES**
(May 17, 1986; from Ivan & Nikita Koloff & Baron Von Raschke; Baltimore)
- * **NWA TV CHAMPION: NIKITA KOLOFF**
(August 17, 1987; from Tully Blanchard; Fayetteville, NC)
- NWA WORLD CHAMPION: RIC FLAIR**
(August 9, 1986; from Dusty Rhodes; St. Louis)
- NWA WORLD TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: THE ROCK 'N' ROLL EXPRESS**
(May 26, 1987; from Rick Rude & Manny Fernandez; Spokane, WA)
- PACIFIC NORTHWEST CHAMPION: MIKE MILLER**
(June 27, 1987; from Rip Oliver; Portland, OR)
- PACIFIC NORTHWEST TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: SUPER NINJA & RIP OLIVER**
(July 25, 1987; from Mike Miller & Cocoa Samoa; Portland, OR)
- PWF CHAMPION: STAN HANSEN**
(April 24, 1987; tournament final over Hiroshi Wajima; Yokohama, Japan)
- PWF TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: STAN HANSEN & TED DIBIASE**
(as mandated by PWF wrestling officials)
- SOUTHEAST CHAMPION: DUTCH MANTEL**
(April 13, 1987; from Exotic Adrian Street; Birmingham, AL)
- SOUTHEAST CONTINENTAL CHAMPION: WENDELL COOLEY**
(April 27, 1987; from Buddy Landell; Birmingham, AL)
- SOUTHEAST CONTINENTAL TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: ROBERT FULLER & JIMMY GOLDEN**
(May 25, 1987; from Jerry Stubbs & Tony Anthony; Birmingham, AL)
- SOUTHEAST U.S. JUNIOR HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: SCOTT ARMSTRONG**
(May 25, 1987; from Tom Pritchard; Birmingham, AL)
- STAMPEDE NORTH AMERICAN CHAMPIONSHIP: OWEN HART**
(April 10, 1987; from Makhan Singh; Calgary, Alberta)
- STAMPEDE INTERNATIONAL TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: BRUCE HART & BRIAN PILLMAN**
(April 6, 1987; tournament final over Ron Starr & Cuban Assassin; Calgary, Alberta)
- TENNESSEE HEAVYWEIGHT TITLE: DOUG FURNAS**
(July 17, 1987; tournament final over Tony Anthony; Knoxville, TN)
- U.S. CHAMPION: LEX LUGER**
(July 11, 1987; from Nikita Koloff; Greensboro, NC)
- U.S. TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: THE MIDNIGHT EXPRESS**
(May 16, 1987; tournament final over Barry Windham & Ronnie Garvin)
- UWA HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: DIAMOND TIMOTHY FLOWERS**
(April 3, 1987; from Billy Two Eagles; Vancouver, British Columbia)
- UWA TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: J.R. BUNDY & RICK DAVIS**
(May 9, 1987; from Jonathan Sayers & Diamond Timothy Flowers; Vancouver, British Columbia)
- UWF HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: STEVE WILLIAMS**
(July 11, 1987; from Big Bubba Rogers; Oklahoma City)
- UWF TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: BRAD ARMSTRONG & TIM HORNER**
(May 17, 1987; from Sting & Rick Steiner; Tulsa, OK)
- * **UWF TV CHAMPION: SHANE DOUGLAS**
(August 3, 1987; from Eddie Gilbert; Morgan City, LA)
- * **WORLD CLASS CHAMPION: AL PEREZ**
(August 21, 1987; default decision over Kevin Von Erich; Dallas, TX)
- WORLD CLASS SIX-MAN CHAMPIONS: TITLE VACANT**
(most recently held by Kevin, Lance, and Mike Von Erich)
- WORLD CLASS TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: ERIC EMBRY & FRANK LANCASTER**
(June 26, 1987; from The Fantastics; Dallas, TX)
- WORLD CLASS TV CHAMPION: TONY ATLAS**
(May 22, 1987; reinstated by World Class officials)
- WORLD CLASS TEXAS CHAMPION: TITLE VACANT**
(most recently held by Al Perez)
- WORLD CLASS TEXAS TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: SKIP YOUNG & TONY ATLAS**
(June 29, 1987; tournament final over Ted Arcidi & Texas Red; Ft. Worth, TX)
- WORLD PACIFIC CHAMPION: SUPERFLY TUI**
(April 11, 1987; from Super Machine I; Honolulu, HI)
- WORLD PACIFIC TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: FARMER BOY IPO & LEROY BROWN**
(August 9, 1986; from Mad Max & Super Max; Honolulu, HI)
- WORLD WOMEN'S CHAMPION: SHERRI MARTEL**
(July 24, 1987; from The Fabulous Moolah; Houston, TX)
- WORLD WOMEN'S TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: LELANI KAI & JUDY MARTIN**
(August 1985; from Desiree Petersen & Velvet McIntyre; Egypt)
- WWC JUNIOR HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: MC GYRE MENDOZA**
(July 18, 1987; from Invader III; San Juan, Puerto Rico)
- WWC NORTH AMERICAN CHAMPION: TNT**
(May 16, 1987; from Miguel Perez Jr.; Bayamon, Puerto Rico)
- WWC NORTH AMERICAN TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: THE HUNTERS**
(June 20, 1987; from Tony Atlas & Miguel Perez Jr.; San Juan, Puerto Rico)
- WWC PUERTO RICAN CHAMPION: KAREEM MUHAMMAD**
(June 6, 1987; from Mighty Igor; Juaynabo, Puerto Rico)
- * **WWC TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: THE HUNTERS**
(August 25, 1987; from Chris & Mark Youngblood; Trinidad, West Indies)
- WWC UNIVERSAL CHAMPION: HERCULES AYALA**
(July 18, 1987; from Carlos Colon; San Juan, Puerto Rico)
- WWF INTERCONTINENTAL CHAMPION: THE HONKY TONK MAN**
(June 2, 1987; from Rick Steamboat; Buffalo, NY)
- WWF WORLD CHAMPION: HULK HOGAN**
(January 23, 1984; from The Iron Sheik; New York, NY)
- WWF WORLD TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: BRETT HART & JIM NEIDHART**
(January 26, 1987; from The British Bulldogs; Tampa, FL)



The triumphant Superpowers (left) may be split apart by Dusty Rhodes' U.S. title aspirations (below).

Rhodes Challenges Luger: WILL DUSTY'S U.S. TITLE HOPES SPLIT THE SUPERPOWERS?

The friendship between Nikita Koloff and Dusty Rhodes is on shaky ground these days. Rhodes' desire to win the U.S. title from Lex Luger, plus Nikita's victory over Tully Blanchard for the NWA TV belt, might have created an unmendable rift that could split The Superpowers forever!



Dusty leglocks Lex Luger (left). "The American Dream" wasted no time in going after Luger, who won the U.S. belt from Nikita.





DUSTY RHODES CLAIMS to have the utmost respect for Nikita Koloff. He calls the Russian one of his best friends, insists that he's proud to have him as a partner, and says that it was very noble of Nikita to leave his uncle and country behind to defend the honor of Magnum T.A.

Likewise, Koloff claims to have the utmost respect for Rhodes. He says he misjudged Dusty when they were arch-enemies and claims to have learned a lot from Rhodes. "Dusty Rhodes is friend of Magnum T.A., so he is always friend of mine," said Nikita one year ago.

Together, they talk glowingly of their \$1 million Crockett Cup victory and their battles against The Four Horsemen. They are an awesome team, combining the skill and experience of Rhodes with the youthfulness and power of Koloff. There has never been a more successful wrestling marriage of a Russian and an American.

Suddenly, however, Rhodes and Koloff are on the verge of divorce. Rhodes is spending more time in the UWF with Steve Williams. Koloff lost his U.S. title to Lex Luger and was left scrambling to regroup. The Superpowers are wrestling together less and less. And now a cold war is developing between The American Dream and The Russian Nightmare.

Was it merely coincidence that Koloff defeated Tully Blanchard for the NWA TV title only 13 days after Rhodes announced his intentions of going after Lex Luger's U.S. title? Or was it actually the case of a proud Russian man fighting back when his territory was being infringed upon? Will jealousy split Rhodes and Nikita? Will Dusty's U.S. title hopes split The Superpowers?

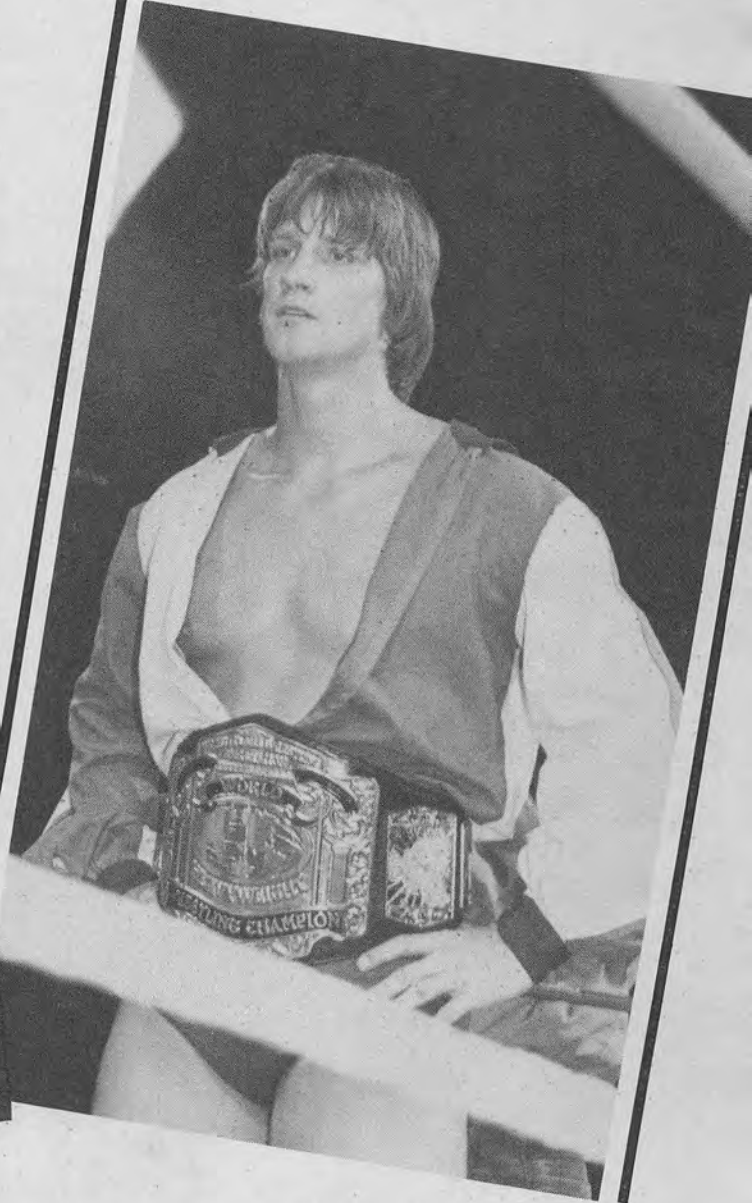
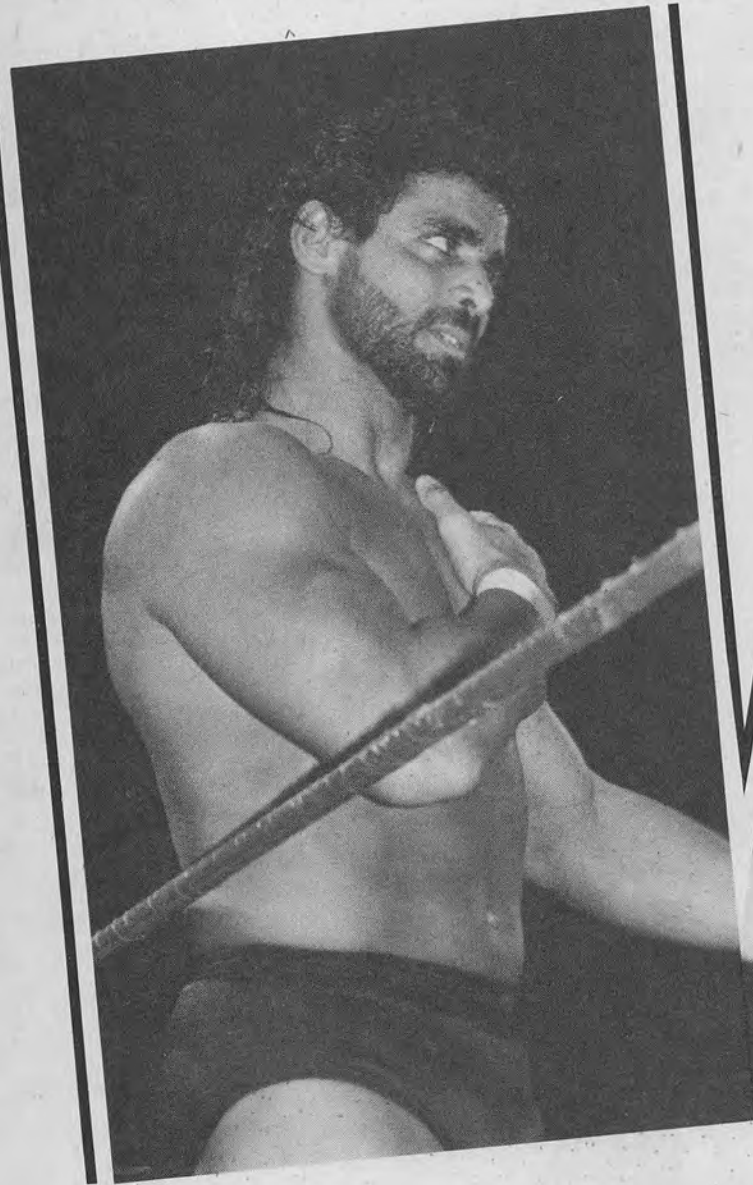
It's a genuine possibility that's quickly becoming reality.

"Where was Dusty Rhodes when we were pounding on his best friend?" asked J.J. Dillon just minutes after Koloff survived a brutal beating from The Four Horsemen and wrested the belt from Blanchard. "Rhodes was nowhere to be seen, but Windham was

(Continued on page 58)

World Class Title Mystery

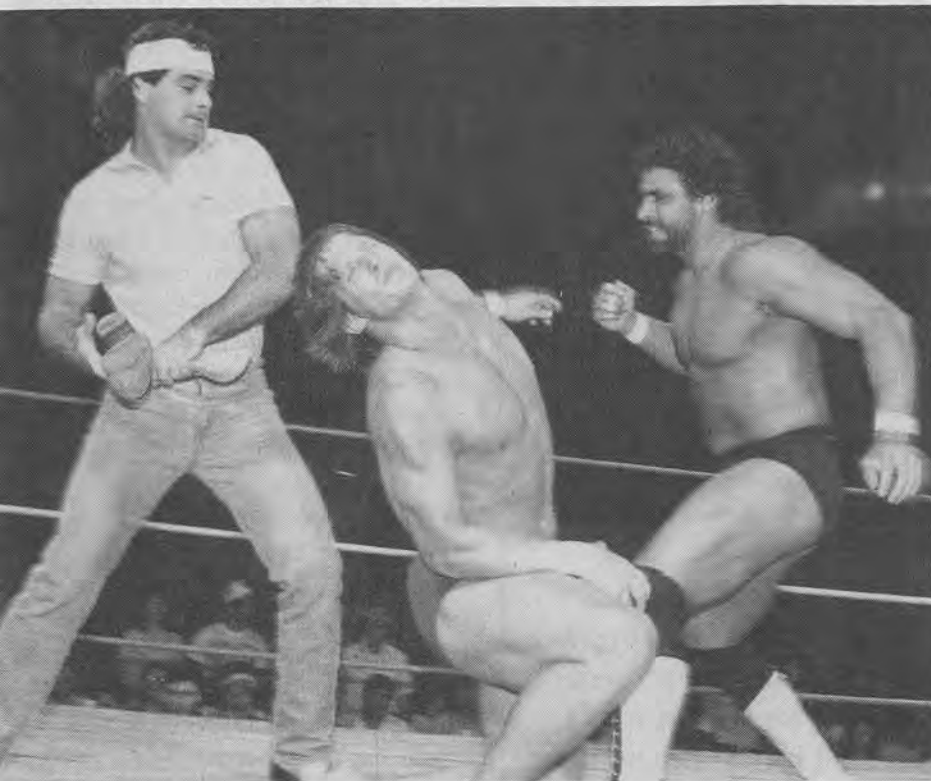
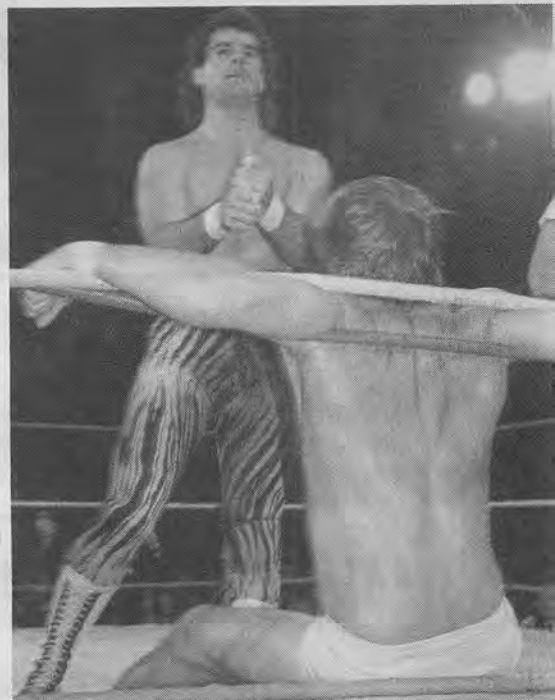
AL PEREZ TAKES KEVIN VON ERICH'S BELT—*BY DEFAULT!*



The World Class commissioners claim they ordered Kevin Von Erich to miss his title match against Al Perez. Manager Gary Hart says that Fritz Von Erich was trying to protect his son. What's the real story behind the World Class title mystery?



Al Perez, the new World Class champion, tries to escape from a Kevin Von Erich bodyscissors (above). Brian Adias prepares to use his "oriental tool" on Von Erich (right). Adias and Perez attack Von Erich (below). Adias' repeated assaults on Von Erich were one reason for the former champion's default.



OVER THE PAST decade, World Class Championship Wrestling has been the site of some of the biggest stories in professional wrestling. The sport has been rocked by World Class headlines trumpeting the death of David Von Erich, the blinding of Chris Adams, the death of Gino Hernandez, World Class' secession from the NWA, Kerry Von Erich's motorcycle accident, Adams' return, and Mike Von Erich's suicide. Now, another episode has been written in wrestling's

longest running dramatic series. Call this one *Father Knows Best*.

"It's obvious to anyone with two eyes that Fritz Von Erich is trying to protect his son from Al Perez," said manager Gary Hart after Kevin Von Erich defaulted his World Class heavyweight title to Perez on August 21 in Dallas. "He didn't want to see his boy embarrassed in front of thousands of people, and that's all there is to it."

Is this the correct explanation of what happened that night in The

Sportatorium? Possibly. But that might be only part of the answer to the latest in a long string of strange events down in the Lone Star State. The current World Class title mystery is enough to keep even the most experienced sleuth scratching his head. After all, why would somebody as talented as Kevin Von Erich give away something so valuable, especially when he had already beaten Perez in the past?

"I'm not so sure of the answer to that question," said Steve Simpson, who often teams with Von Erich. "As everybody knows, Kevin has had a lot of problems lately, so that might have had something to do with it. You know, I think most people don't realize how tough it is to be a champion, especially when you're a Von Erich and everybody knows you. There's a lot of pressure. Yeah, I was surprised that Kevin didn't show up for that match, but I'm sure there was a reason."

The official reason for Kevin's absence seems too unlikely. Four days earlier in Ft. Worth, Texas, Von Erich was injured in a singles match by Brian Adias' "oriental tool," a vicious spike to the throat with the thumb. Back in May, Kevin was hospitalized twice because of Adias' "tool," and on a recent tour of Japan Kevin complained

(Continued on page 56)

HOTSEAT

MAGNUM T.A.

"I'LL BE BACK IN THE RING FOR STARRCADE '88!"

LEX LUGER'S VICTORY over Nikita Koloff for the United States championship in July had to touch a sensitive nerve with fans of Magnum T.A. It signified the end of an era; in effect, the end of Magnum T.A.'s title reign, which began on October 14, 1986, when he was seriously injured in an automobile accident. Magnum had held the belt vicariously since then through his Russian friend.

Nikita decided to devote his career to Magnum following that accident, just as many fans decided to retain their devotion to the fallen young star. Although the accident would have killed a lesser man, Magnum T.A. only grew as a person (and in the public's eyes) as he proceeded with his miraculous recovery. Little by little, the man who was never supposed to walk again regained movement throughout his body.

And while Magnum fought his own battle, Nikita kept the legend alive in the ring. There are some who say that Nikita wrestled the greatest matches of his career following Magnum's injury. Unfortunately, he finally ran into an immovable object, the sensational Luger.

Inside Wrestling Associate Editor Dave Rosenbaum spoke with Magnum

recently to get his thoughts about Nikita's loss, the direction T.A.'s career has taken, and a possible return to the ring in this very special "Hotseat" interview.

Q: Once again, Magnum, thank you for taking the time to speak with me. Let's start off with Lex Luger's victory over Nikita Koloff for the U.S. belt. What was your

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Never walk again, huh?
Well, I proved them wrong.
There's no reason why I
can't get into good enough
shape to return, but there's
still plenty of work to be
done.

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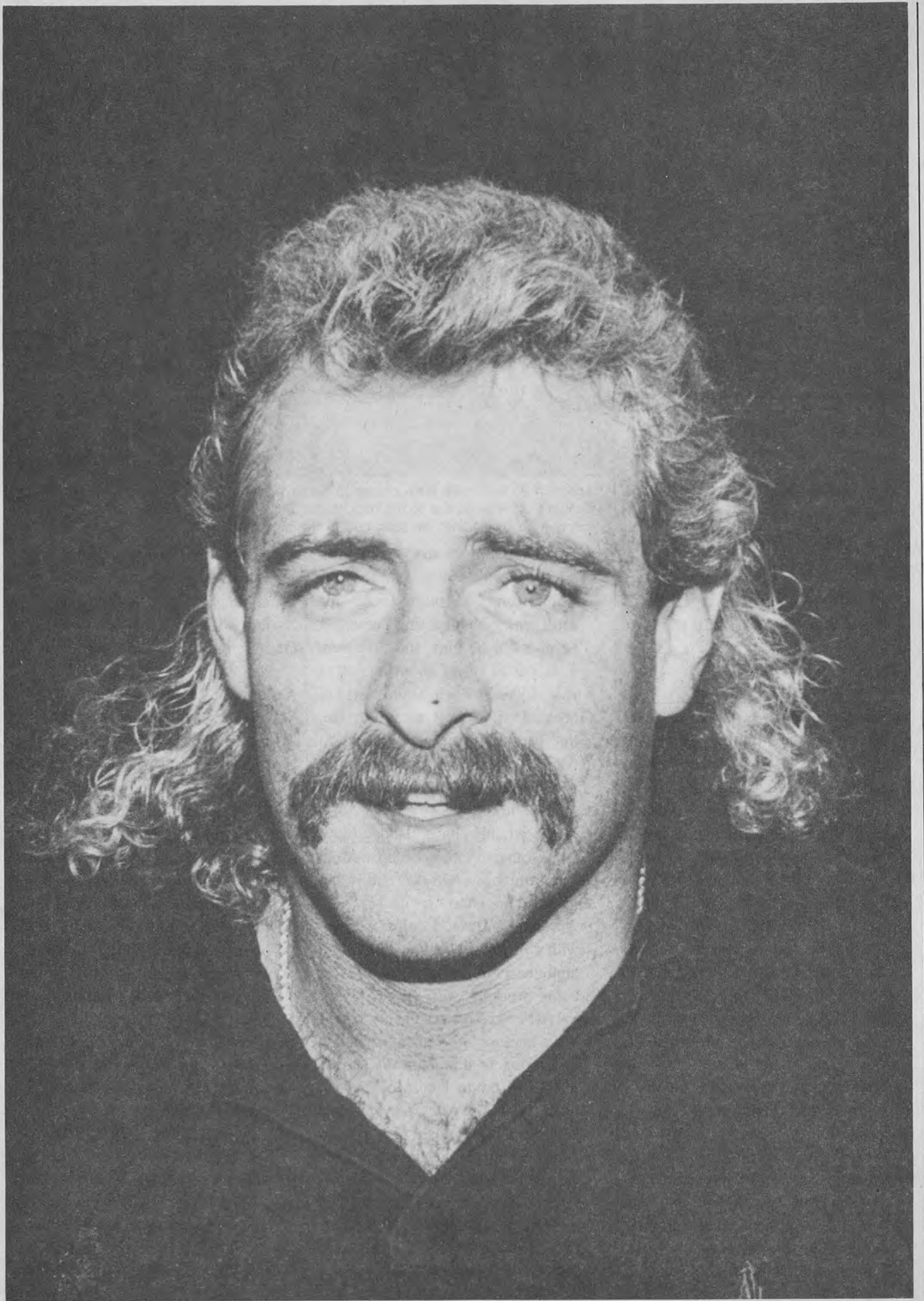
reaction when you first heard about Nikita's loss?

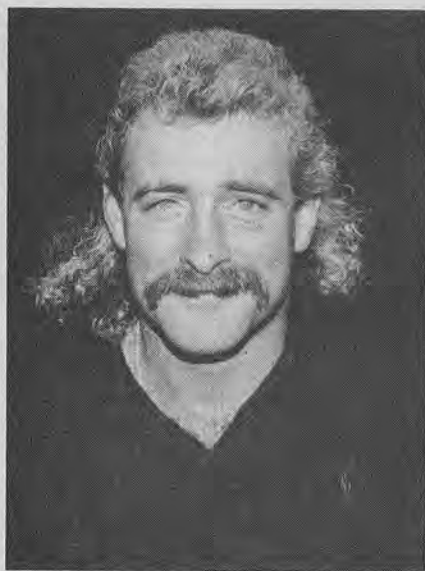
A: Well, naturally, I was very saddened because I think Nikita has been a great champion and very good for the sport. You know, it's amazing how a person can change.

I used to think that Nikita was the most evil person in the world, but as it turns out, his uncle Ivan was behind his evil. In reality, Nikita is a great, compassionate man and an outstanding athlete. He has a lot of integrity—I don't think anybody can doubt that—and he's incredibly determined.

Q: Do you think he'll win the belt back?

A: I don't know, it's really hard to say because Luger is such an incredible athlete and so ruthless. The thing is, J.J. Dillon will do anything to keep his man from losing the title, but in most cases nothing is necessary. That's how good Luger is. You see, I held the belt for a long time, almost a year, and I know that it's a little easier to defend the title than to win it; the other guy has to pin you, but all you have to do is win in any way. That's a big edge. You know, the champ can get counted out, but he still walks back to the dressing room with his belt, and that's what's important. The other thing is that Luger is a great athlete and he's in really tremendous shape. If he keeps his mind on wrestling and doesn't get too sidetracked by the





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It's amazing how a person can change. I used to think that Nikita [Koloff] was the most evil person in the world. In reality, he's a great, compassionate man.

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Horsemen, he's only going to improve, and that'll make it tougher for Nikita. But, like I said, Nikita is also a great athlete, very dedicated, a tremendous competitor, and I think he can do it.

Q: He recently beat your old nemesis, Tully Blanchard, for the TV title.

A: Yes, and that was a very big win for him because it came less than a month after the loss to Luger. He needed something to get his confidence back, get back on the right track, because losing the belt after you've held it for so long can be a very traumatic experience, especially under the circumstances.

Q: What do you mean?

A: Well, it's no secret that Nikita dedicated his career to fighting for me, so in a way he was carrying the load for two men. That's a very tough thing to do, and I've told Nikita a dozen times that while I appreciate what he's trying to do,



Magnum T.A. interviews UWF champion Steve Williams. Although he enjoys announcing, Magnum's ultimate goal is to get back in the ring. He's convinced that he can sufficiently recover from the injuries he sustained in the auto accident.

he should only worry about himself. He can't worry about Nikita Koloff and Magnum T.A. He can't worry about losing because if he does I'd be hurt, too. Magnum T.A. has to worry about himself. I was saddened when Nikita lost, not because of what it meant to me, but because of what it meant to Nikita. It's his belt, his life. I have my life and I've managed to carry on just fine.

Q: You certainly have, and you've even found another occupation to keep you busy. Do you enjoy being an announcer in the UWF?

A: Absolutely, Dave. I enjoy working with Jim Ross, he's one of the best announcers in the sport, and I even enjoy working with Missy Hyatt. Sort of. She can get on my nerves a bit because she's always whining and trying to dominate the shows, but I just try to ignore her, which isn't too easy. After all, she is a very attractive woman. But back to Jim; he's made the transition very easy. You know, there's a big difference between wrestling and announcing. You see things differently when you're outside the ring, and that takes an adjustment. Jim was always there to help me,

though, and he always was encouraging. I've definitely enjoyed this, although I can't wait to get back into the ring.

Q: A return to the ring? When would that be?

A: I can't say exactly, but I like to think that I'll be back in the ring for Starrcade '88. That's my goal right now. Starrcade means a lot to me, because that's where I won the U.S. title from Blanchard in '85. I'm not saying that I'll *definitely* be back for Starrcade, but it's something to shoot for. I think I've told you before that I'm trying to make my goals realistic so that I don't get discouraged. I think that might be a realistic goal, but we're looking very far ahead. I still have a lot of work to do.

Q: How are you doing right now? How much do you weigh?

A: I'm at 215 pounds. I was at 235 when I wrestled.

Q: And at what stage of your rehabilitation are you?

A: Well, I'm still going to physical therapy three days a week. The movement in my right arm and right hand is improving all the time—that was the side that was affected the most—although not all

of the messages from my brain are making everything run properly on the right side. I'd say I'm at 50 percent on my right side. My arm is getting better. By the way, I underwent surgery three weeks ago, but it was only arthroscopic surgery on my right knee. It was from wrestling injuries, nothing to do with the accident. I'm fine now and the knee is feeling better.

Q: You had a lot of nerve damage after the accident, which was the reason the doctors said you'd never walk again. How is that progressing?

A: Never walk again, huh? Well, I proved them wrong. The nerve damage all over my body is getting better. That's the reason I hope to wrestle again. There's no reason why I can't get into good enough shape to return, but like I said, there's still plenty of work to be done.

Q: You really are quite a story. Do you realize what kind of a role model you've been for people, young and old?

A: I'm glad to hear you saying that, because that's one of the main things I want to come out of this. I want people to see that they should never give up. Anything is possible in this world if you just give it the effort. Like I told you in Baltimore at the Crockett Cup, I want to be a positive influence on people. I

want to prove to people that through prayers and hard work, they can do anything they want. They can really get somewhere. No situation is ever hopeless. It's only hopeless once you give up. That's the real lesson out of all this. Look at me. It was all over for me. The doctors said I should have died. They said there was no chance I'd ever walk again, but I wasn't listening to them. I was listening to myself, and inside I knew that I would overcome this. And like I said, there's still a long way to go. But I've come farther than anyone ever thought I would. How can anyone ever give up on themselves after looking at what I've achieved?



Magnum locks up with Nikita Koloff in a battle before Magnum's accident. Even Magnum sometimes finds it hard to believe that they're friends now.

Q: The fans certainly recognize what you've done. You seem to get the biggest ovation of the night whenever you appear at a wrestling card. That scene in Charlotte at The Great American Bash was really something. Care to describe what happened?

A: That was a great feeling, landing in that packed stadium in a helicopter, walking out on the red carpet, and hearing the crowd go crazy. You know, that's the kind of thing that's kept me going all this time. Whenever I feel a little down, I think of how the fans have supported me through all this. Their



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I want to be a positive influence on people. I want to prove to them that through prayers and hard work, they can do anything they want.
”

cheers and encouragement have really meant a lot to me.

Q: Let's switch directions for a moment. Steve Williams is now UWF heavyweight champion, the first fan favorite to hold that title. You were North American champion in this area before it became the UWF, so you must have some insight into Williams' victory.

A: Well, Steve is a great wrestler and this is a very difficult area to be successful in. The wrestlers here are all very tough—it's always been that way—and it takes a lot of endurance to be successful. But let me tell you, they don't come any tougher than Steve. If anyone can hold that belt for a long time, it's Doc. He's a great wrestler.

Q: Magnum T.A., thanks once again for your time.

A: It's been a pleasure, Dave. And tell the fans I'll see them at Starrcade '88! □



Magnum chats with Jim Crockett before The Great American Bash in Charlotte, where he made a memorable appearance.

WARNING

TO RANDY SAVAGE:

THE EVIDENCE IS as puzzling as it is indisputable: "Macho Man" Randy Savage, the sport's most extraordinary rulebreaker, is suddenly being given heros' welcomes from the same audiences that months ago rejoiced at his every defeat. This new fan response is inexplicable. Savage's legendary style of brutality and chaos remains the same; feminist groups throughout the country continue to protest his mistreatment of Miss Elizabeth. Yet, at every WWF whistlestop, the cheers continue to swell.

Savage's current feud against The Honky Tonk Man may account for a slight rise in his popularity, but how does one explain the volume of cheers that roar through an arena when he battles



THE FANS WILL MAKE YOU OR ~~BREAK~~ YOU

Hulk Hogan? Sources close to Savage claim that Elizabeth is overjoyed at the increased fan response while Savage remains non-plussed. In the past, however, Savage has shown a tendency to side with his beautiful manager. The feeling around the WWF is if Elizabeth wishes Savage to clean up his act and court fan approval,

he will.

The ramifications of such an action could be tremendous. "It would effectively destroy Randy Savage in the WWF," claims veteran wrestling critic Matt Brock. "Savage is an amalgam of opposing forces. He's a living paradox, a classic wrestler in the mold of the '80s; a hated man with unsur-

passed athletic skills. His entire kinetic balance would be undermined as a fan favorite. A tentative Randy Savage is unthinkable. He's gotten to where he is by following his instincts—sharp, cruel, *punishing* instincts. If he begins to worry about fan reaction, he's had it."

As far as championships are

Photos by David Fitzgerald

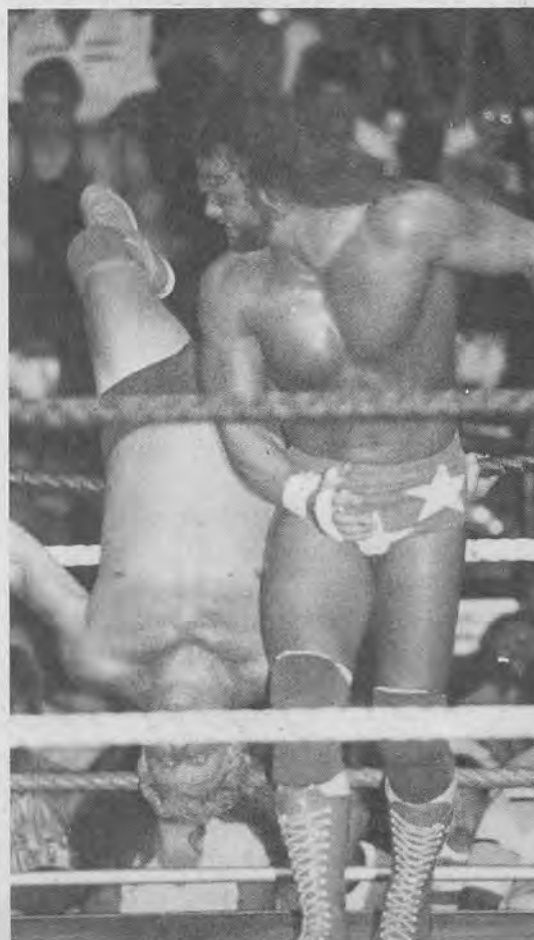
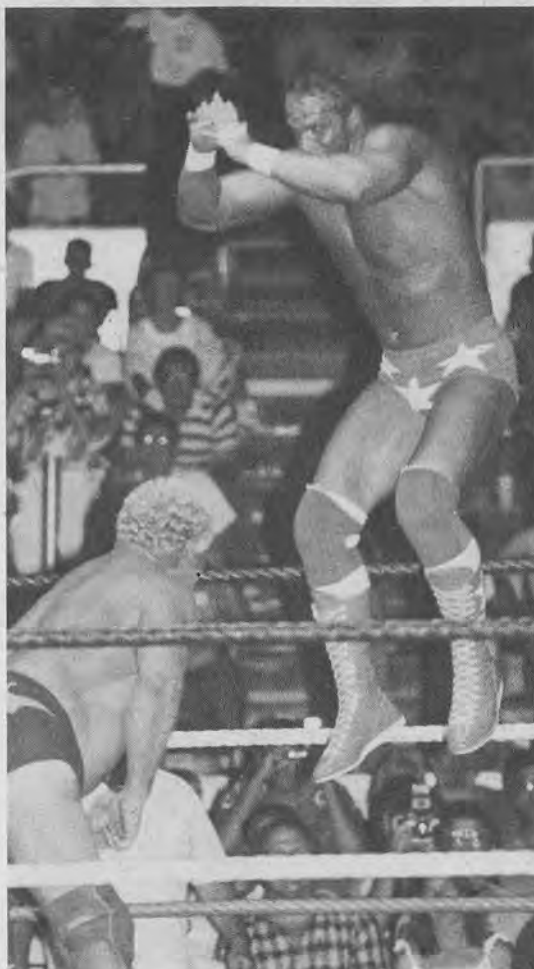
concerned, becoming a fan favorite would seem to dash any hopes Savage and Elizabeth have of "The Macho Man" capturing the WWF heavyweight crown. Although he's been unable to wrest the title belt from Hogan thus far, Savage's record against the WWF champ is superior to that of any of Hogan's other opponents. Savage's confrontations with Hogan are guaranteed sellouts, but given the WWF's reluctance to pit fan favorites against one another, that's a guarantee that would expire the moment Savage was perceived as a darling of the crowd.

"The WWF wouldn't care," an official explained. "Now that [Bam Bam] Bigelow, [Rick] Rude, and [Ted] DiBiase are in the area, Hogan has plenty of opponents to last him through the winter. They feel they're covered in the box office. In fact, as a fan favorite, Savage could team with Hogan. Imagine the excitement they could generate as a tag team. It would far surpass Hogan-Orndorff or Hogan-Patera."

Is it that simple? Would some extra hand-clapping suddenly entice Savage to forget his long-standing feud with Hogan? History does not favor such an occurrence. Paul Orndorff's behavior notwithstanding (eventually, "Mr. Wonderful" proved less than wonderful, betraying Hogan for another shot at the title; now he's a fan favorite again, the latest development in what is turning into a remarkably schizophrenic career), befriending Hogan would be contrary to everything in Savage's nature.

"You can't calm a wild beast," Brock is quick to observe. "However the fans—or Elizabeth herself—attempt to domesticate Randy Savage, eventually his true nature will emerge."

Brock is quick to play devil's advocate to his own argument, however, when he points out that "cheers might not affect Savage



Will a subtle shift to fan favorite be Randy Savage's undoing? He may resist the accolades of the fans, but with Elizabeth watching anxiously can "The Macho Man" afford to ignore their cheers?



Randy "Macho Man" Savage targets Harley Race for a flying axhandle (top) and backflips him (left). Race attempts to piledrive Savage (above). Recently, "Macho Man" has been facing rulebreakers. Although Savage hasn't changed his tactics, the fans are liking him more than ever, and Elizabeth couldn't be happier.



Race tries to suplex Savage (above left), but gets caught in a sleeper (above right). Savage has never courted the fans' cheers, but he is always eager to please Elizabeth, despite the offensive way in which he sometimes treats her.



Savage blocks a Race forearm. Being a fan favorite would most likely deny Savage a shot at Hulk Hogan.

the way they have some other wrestlers. He is very peculiar. While other grapplers may claim otherwise, they really covet crowd support. Not Savage. He loves flamboyance. He loves the spotlight. He loves the competition. But he couldn't care less about the reaction. To him, noise is noise. He won't separate boos from cheers, and thus far he hasn't."

The chemistry between Savage and the fans is similar to the one that won fan support for The Road Warriors: When they're bad, they're very, very good. The Warriors' rugged, no-nonsense style initially horrified the wrestling world. Hawk and Animal seemed to represent a threat to the entire body of the sport. Soon, a Warrior cult developed among rulebreaking fans. Sporadic cheers from renegade patrons formed a small—but vocal—minority at

Warrior matches.

Then, as The Legion of Doom piled victory upon victory, fans of all types began to appreciate them for the dominating team they were. Excellence thus recognized, The Road Warriors—still bad as ever—became one of the most popular teams in the country.

The results were devastating.

Buoyed by unanimous fan support, the Warriors appeared to slip almost instantly. Popularity dulled their edge. They lost their hunger—and occasionally even lost their matches, a previously unthinkable occurrence. When Steve Regal and Jim Garvin upset them for the AWA tag team crown, the wrestling world was shocked. A year before, either Hawk or Animal would have disposed of both Regal and Garvin without breaking a sweat. Yet all that was needed was a short bask in the limelight to melt their resolve. The stories with headlines such as "Have The Road Warriors Lost Their Killer Instinct?" continue to be discussed by serious fans everywhere.

Is this the future of Randy Savage? If the fiercest tag team in wrestling history could be corrupted by fan support, how will it affect Savage? How will Elizabeth's longing for public acceptance affect him? Can he flourish in a world that places him arm-in-arm with Hulk Hogan—and places Elizabeth in such friendly proximity to a World champion she's always professed to admire?

"Randy Savage will do *anything* to please Elizabeth," wrestling journalists declare. Does "anything" include cutting his own throat? If Savage changed simply to appease his manager and his new fans, he might find himself adrift in turbulent WWF waters without benefit of a motor, a compass, or a map. He would become shipwrecked in unfamiliar terrain with lots of cheers—but no titles. □

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The telephone wires sizzle every month as two top wrestlers voice their rage and hostility toward each other. This is the unedited transcript of their conversation, your chance to see the raw emotion that results when two antagonists face off ... One on One

ONE ON ONE



AT ONE TIME, they were among the sport's most recognizable tag teams. Say "The Road Warriors" and everybody thinks of Hawk and Animal. Say "The Rock 'n' Roll Express" and everybody thinks of Rick Morton and Robert Gibson. Say "The Midnight Express" and everybody thinks of Dennis Condrey and Bobby Eaton.

Not anymore. While Condrey and Eaton seemed destined to stay together forever, they broke up last March when manager Jim Cornette shocked the wrestling world by firing Condrey and hiring Stan Lane. It was a stunning move not only because The Midnight Express had been so successful, but because Condrey was an original member of the Midnights. Cornette and Eaton came later.

And so the team that held the NWA World tag team belts for over six months in 1986 was split up after a three-year marriage. Cornette claimed that his mother, disgusted by the Midnights' inability to regain the belts, ordered a change—any change. So Cornette followed orders.

Condrey hoped that Eaton would protest the move, but that never happened. Suddenly without a job, Condrey contacted former partner Randy Rose. They decided to reunite as The (original) Midnight Express and wrestle in the AWA. Paul E. Dangerously was hired as their manager, and immediately, the original Midnight Express made an impact on the AWA tag team picture.

Plenty has happened since the split-

up, but Eaton and Condrey haven't spoken once, at least not until *Inside Wrestling* brought them together and asked them to air their views ... "One on One."

DENNIS CONDREY:

Well, here we are. It's been some time, but I really don't have anything against you, Bobby, my beef is with Cornette. We were a great team, and there was no reason for Cornette to dump me. So I went back to my roots with Randy. As far as I'm concerned, Cornette's a scum for keeping the "Midnight Express" name.

BOBBY EATON:

You know as well as I do, Dennis, that I've got nothing to say about that. I just go out there and do my job and whatever name my team is called doesn't

"Face it, Bobby, you couldn't last on your own without Cornette. You'd be like a dog thrown out in the cold. The fans know who the real Midnight Express is—Randy Rose and yours truly."

—Dennis Condrey

matter to me. You gotta understand, though, that the name The Midnight Express is known throughout the world, and Jimmy just wasn't gonna give up on a good thing. Besides, I don't really see why he should've.

DC: He should've, because now he's riding on the coattails of my success. By all rights, the name "Midnight Express" belongs to me if it belongs to anybody; it belongs to me and Randy.

BE: Wrong, Bobby, it belonged to you and me, but we're history. Listen, you know as well as I do that after we lost to Morton and Gibson, we went into a slump. It was Jimmy's job to get us out of that slump, so he had to get rid of one of us. And he certainly wasn't gonna get rid of me.

DC: Wait a second, buddy—he didn't

NONE



"[Stan] Lane and I are the new and improved edition, better than ever. If I remember correctly, Jimmy only used to help out when you were in trouble, which seemed to be most of the time."

—Bobby Eaton

have to get rid of *any* of us. You ever think that maybe *he* was the problem? Him or maybe that idiot mother of his? Talk about a mamma's boy! You know as well as I do that I fought the move, but Jimmy boy wouldn't listen. He had to follow Mamma's suggestion. Wimp. And I notice you didn't speak up much when I was fighting for the team.

BE: Don't be so self-righteous, buddy. Don't you go telling me who I'm supposed to be speaking up for. All I know is that we weren't winning a thing, and if somebody had to go, I was just glad it wasn't me. Listen, Dennis, we had a good thing going for a while, but things just changed. You just couldn't handle it. I had no objections to adding a stronger member to the team. Let me

tell ya something, Dennis, Lane makes you look like a Mulkey.

DC: In case you hadn't noticed, the Mulkeys aren't too bad; I noticed they almost pinned your sorry butt one Saturday afternoon on television! Took Cornette's tennis racket to fix your blunder. Face it, Bobby, you couldn't last on your own without Cornette. You'd be like a dog thrown out in the cold, winter wind howling, up to your fuzzy butt in snow and ice. Pretty sorry picture, isn't it? About as sorry as you and Lane attempting to call yourselves The Midnight Express. But the fans know who the *real* Midnight Express is—Randy Rose and yours truly.

BE: Give me a break, loser. You call that clown Rose a wrestler? The same guy who parades around

with a red rose on the back of his robe? What kind of real man would walk around in a costume like that? Face it, Dennis, you're clutching at straws. You and Rose might be the original Midnight Express, but original isn't always better. Stan and I are the new and improved edition, better than ever, and we've never needed Jimmy's interference to win a match. If I remember correctly, Jimmy only used to help out when *you* were in trouble, which seemed to be most of the time.

DC: Your memory is about as bad as your wrestling, brother. Seems to me that *I* was the one who carried the team, not the other way around. My guess is that Cornette felt sorry for you and that's probably why he kept you around. Yeah, he felt *real* sorry for you, Bobby boy. But hey—don't spill any crocodile tears over it, *Beautiful*, I'll make you a little wager right here and now.

BE: What kind of wager, *Loverboy*?

DC: I'll bet you that me and Randy win the AWA World tag team belts long before you and Lane—ha! Lane! Half a former Fabulous Ones—talk about a team of cast-offs! Anyway, me and Randy will win the AWA World belts before you and Lane win the NWA World belts.

BE: Win the AWA belts? There's a tough task, beating Zukhov and Ustinov, real world-class wrestlers. I'm telling ya, Condrey, you're going senile, which just about makes you fit right in where you're wrestling now. Every prelim bum in the country ends up as a main eventer in the AWA, and you're the latest. If you haven't noticed, stranger, me and Stan have the United States belts, something I never had when you were around. I'm not just stating opinion here, buddy, I'm stating facts. Before you left, we had nothing. Now I'm a champion, so you've already lost that bet, just like you've lost everything else. And say what you want about Stan, but he's a champion and he's always been one, whether with me or with somebody else. You've always been a loser, but now you're off my bandwagon. Good riddance! □

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SINCERELY YOURS

(Continued from page 6)

gotta go!"

Why don't they plan the hour to make sure everything fits, cut down on the nonsense prelim bouts and show the main event first? Don't worry, we'll stay tuned for the rest of the stupid matches!

FRANK MIKEC
Addison, IL

AGING ADONIS

Recently, while browsing through some old issues of *Inside Wrestling*, I came across a picture of a lean, mean,



In 1981, Adrian Adonis was in fighting trim (above), but today he has deteriorated into a blubbery joke (below), writes Chris Kasprzyk.



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fighting machine named Adrian Adonis. Looking at this picture would give one the impression of a future champion.

And where is he now? Wrestling in double-extra-large pink tights with leg warmers and bleached-blond hair. What happened? Adonis went from a tough tag team champion to a 320-pound joke.

Had Adonis kept in shape and worked out, he might have been a major champion somewhere in the world right now. He would have had the brute force, wrestling expertise, and just the right amount of experience to beat Ric Flair or even Hulk Hogan. How interesting it would be to see what Adonis would be like today had he kept up with himself. It's too bad time can't reverse itself and correct the mistakes made by Adonis.

CHRIS J. KASPRZYK
Hamburg, NY

EQUAL ABUSE?

I have been an avid wrestling fan for longer than I can recall. I happen to be fortunate enough to be in an area where I can get the NWA's two major weekly broadcasts, *World Wide Wrestling* and *NWA Pro Wrestling*.

Don't get me wrong—there are some fine, dedicated athletes here, but I don't think The Rock 'n' Roll Express are among that elite group. Robert Gibson is a fine wrestler and Rick Morton is a great talker, but that's as far as I'd go.

Another thing about this team is that whenever they double-team their opposition, everyone refers to it as teamwork. But when The Midnight Express, The Four Horsemen, or any wrestler who isn't popular does it, they refer to it as breaking the rules. Get the message?

It must be understood that I am not a supporter of the so-called bad guys, but I believe that each athlete deserves equal analysis. If this isn't carried out by the fans, then the promoters and commentators should do it.

JIMMY JOHNSON
Greensboro, NC

(Continued on page 50)

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SINCERELY YOURS

(Continued from page 49)

WHY THEY HATE HONKY TONK

I was reading "Behind The Dressing Room Door" (October 1987) in which David Rosenbaum asked what The



Honky Tonk Man did to deserve the fans' hatred. Well, I have some answers.

When he first came to the WWF, Honky Tonk complained to Jesse Ventura that he was not getting enough cheers, bringing about the so-called "vote of confidence." The following week, Honky Tonk said that he had kissed babies and shook hands, but said that the fans should "wipe that puke off your babies' mouths and wipe that grease off your hands before approaching me."

The week Honky Tonk didn't get the votes he wanted, he threatened to "slap some of those babies and drag someone into the ring if that's what it takes to get some attention around here."

He cheated to win the Intercontinental belt from Rick Steamboat by grabbing the ropes to make the pin.

And the worst reason of all is that he insults the late, great Elvis Presley by calling him fat and overweight and saying that he couldn't sing a tune. He once claimed that Elvis stole a song from him!

If you ask me, Honky Tonk is a jerk. He has no respect for the memory of Elvis, he's a cheat, and he can't

sing a note himself. I hope "The Dragon" or Jake "The Snake" Roberts beats him for the belt and sends Honky Tonk and Jimmy Hart back to Honkyland eating Honkyburgers!

DAVID WEBER
Largo, FL ☐



The Honky Tonk Man greets his fans at ringside. In David Weber's opinion, Honky Tonk doesn't deserve any cheers at all.

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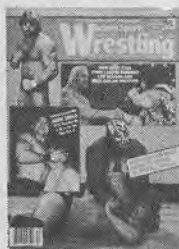
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(Slaughter, Martel, Hogan, Rhodes, Valiant, JVD & Steamboat)



Winter 1984

Color centerfold:
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ON ASSIGNMENT

(Continued from page 20)



Lex Luger was also in Hunter's dream, which bothered her so much that she told Flair about it. Flair said that her dream was caused by the biased feelings she has toward the Horsemen.

Flair attempt to explain to the tribal chief. As soon as he opens his mouth a spear appears at his throat. I scream. So does everyone else. Except Abdullah, because he is nowhere to be found. Then Cornette, fumbling for his searchlight, cries: "There he is, swimming ashore!"

And he is. Like an overinflated Indiana Jones, Abdullah is swimming to shore through 200 yards of crocodile-laced waters. Aboard ship we are encouraged by this effort. Abdullah is the only man who might help us. Then Luger brings us back to reality: "Is he going to help them escape or help kill them?" I can't immediately answer that question; neither can anyone else.

Then I wake up in a cold sweat. The dream plagued me to such an extent that the next morning I called Ric Flair and arranged an interview.

"Tell me about The Four Horsemen," I said. "Outside the ring, I know so little about you. Do you cheat at cards? Are you fair to your girlfriends?" Flair threw me a sardonic look. I plodded on. "I mean, if you guys are such rulebreakers inside the ring, what

do you do on the outside? Do you shoplift? Cheat on your income taxes? Do you tip the paperboy?"

I was desperate for answers. Flair was desperate to figure out what was wrong with me. "I think I understand your dilemma," he said in that disgustingly suave way he has with women. "Your problem is your feeling that my colleagues and I flout the rules inside the ring. You wonder why we do it. What motivates us. And does that criminal behavior carry over into conventional society?"

Flair looked utterly self-satisfied. I soon discovered why. "Liz, you might think you're more sophisticated than everyone else, but you've got the same problems. I don't cheat. The Four Horsemen don't cheat, we react. Our behavior is triggered by men like Dusty Rhodes and The Rock 'n' Roll Express. In their attempts to defeat us, they resort to grim and desperate tactics.

"But the fans, reporters, and promoters prefer to ignore their behavior. Instead, they zero in on us. We come out looking like 'rulebreakers.' Forget about it. It's all a scam.

"I'm the nicest guy you'd ever want to meet. Tip the paperboy? Hell, my tips'll send the kid through college. I carry enough little old ladies across the street to qualify for Eagle Scout. Only in the ring am I perceived as a bad guy. And it's all *your* fault. That's why you had your dream. All the lies have caught up to you. In your sleep, the truth emerges.

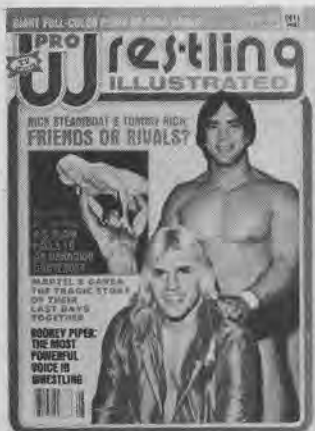
"You're different from all the other journalists, Liz. I mean it. How 'bout you and I going out tonight? Some champagne, a few candles, my beach house. What do you say?"

What could I say? What does one say when a dream turns into a nightmare? ☐

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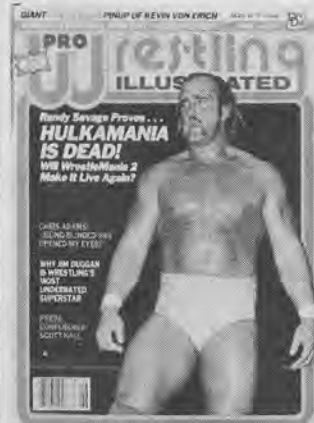
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DRESSING ROOM

(Continued from page 10)

and came to a head when Hogan refused to take a phone call from Orndorff.

As we've seen so many times before, Orndorff doesn't stay friends with people for long, mainly because he possesses such a fragile psyche. When he first arrived in the WWF back in 1984 after spending time as a fan favorite, Orndorff formed a famous



The new partnership of Oliver Humperdink (above) and Paul Orndorff (opposite page) should not be trusted by the fans, writes Dave Rosenbaum.

partnership with Roddy Piper (talk about a combination of two psychopaths!) that lasted all of 15 months before their stormy breakup following the first WrestleMania. Suddenly, Orndorff was on the side of former archenemy Hulk Hogan and wrestling against Piper and Bob Orton.

For the past year or so, Orndorff seemed to have a good thing going with Heenan. Incredibly, two of the biggest egos in the sport—Orndorff and Hercules Hernandez—managed to survive together in Heenan's camp. Finally, "The Brain" had a stable worth bragging about. Then a third ego, Rick Rude, crossed over from the NWA, and it was too much for Orndorff to take. Heenan made the mistake of declaring on national TV that Rude



had the best body in the world. Orndorff took exception to the remark.

Enter Sir Oliver Humperdink, whose arrival in the WWF from Florida had been public knowledge for some time. Vince McMahon Jr. makes believe that Humperdink never existed, but those who know wrestling—and especially those who read this magazine—are well aware that for the past 14 years Humperdink has been one of the most notorious managers in wrestling.

Humperdink is the personification of a rulebreaker's manager. Down in Florida, he gained a reputation for putting bounties on the heads of unwanted fan favorites. He claims to have run Lex Luger and Barry Windham out of Florida, but there isn't an ounce of truth to those claims. Most recently, he directed Dory Funk Jr. and The Tahitian Prince in a feud against Blackjack Mulligan and Kevin Sullivan, and he even stepped into the ring himself from time to time. Humperdink's presence is enough to enrage any Florida wrestling fan; I wonder how they'll react when the WWF goes to the Sunshine State.

The news that Humperdink planned to manage fan favorites in the WWF came as a shock to everyone who knew the man. "That should last for about a day," snapped Barry Windham. "I

know Humperdink as well as anyone, and I don't think there's a more ruthless manager in the world. It's pretty farfetched for me to believe that just by going to the WWF he's become a good man. Humperdink is deadly, and he'll always be that way."

In fact, just a few days prior to Humperdink's departure from Florida, Dory Funk Jr. stole the Florida belt from champion Mike Rotundo. It is common knowledge that Humperdink was behind that scheme, as he was behind almost every Florida wrestling crime for the past few years. "Humperdink" is synonymous with "havoc."

So here we have Orndorff and Humperdink, together under one roof, claiming that they're on the side of good. Incredibly, they're getting cheered by the fans!

Humperdink, a man raised on rulebreaking, knows only one path and has no choice but to point Orndorff in the wrong direction. I wouldn't be surprised to see Humperdink become even *more* hated than Heenan in the WWF. Before long, you might be rooting for Rude against Orndorff. In fact, Humperdink is the only man in wrestling that could make Hulk Hogan become friends with Bobby Heenan.

Just imagine: Bobby Heenan a fan favorite. Don't dismiss the idea. Anything is possible with Orndorff and Humperdink. ☐

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PEREZ-VON ERICH

(Continued from page 37)

about neck and head pains. Although Adias only recently started using the "tool," it's apparent that this unusual maneuver is a deadly weapon.

Following that match in Ft. Worth, Von Erich was examined by the ring-side doctor. "Kevin is fine and I don't see any reason why he shouldn't be able to wrestle, as long as he doesn't experience any further pain," the doctor said. But hours later, the WCCW medical advisory board ordered Kevin to take seven days off because of his physical condition.

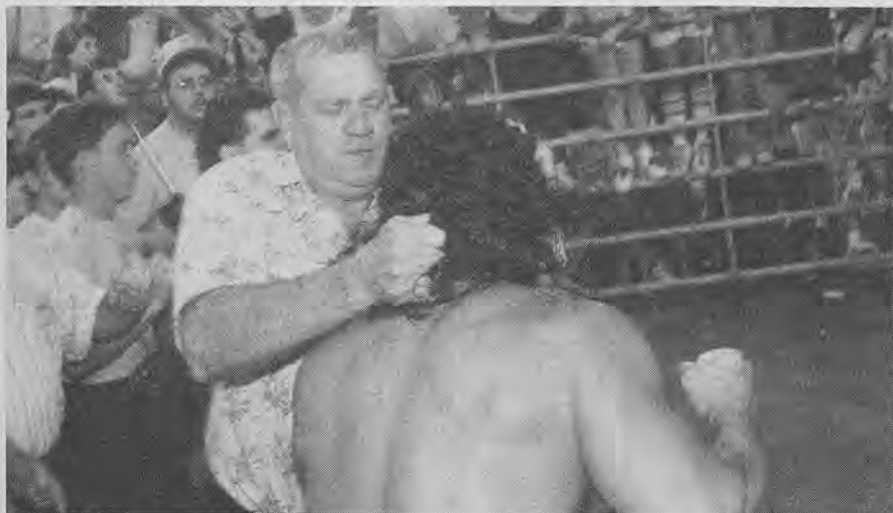
This was a highly unusual announcement. Why did the board ignore the doctor's report? Because of the ruling, Kevin was forced to miss his title defense against Perez. This becomes even stranger when one takes into account that Fritz Von Erich is a member of the board, along with WCCW referees Rick Hazzard and Ralph Pulley, plus representatives from Bright and Company. Why would Fritz allow his son to miss a title defense? And was this the *real* reason, or was World Class just trying to cover up for Kevin's absence?

If we are to believe that Fritz wanted Kevin to miss the match, we in turn have to wonder why. Earlier in the summer, Fritz came to his son's rescue when Kevin was absorbing a beating at the hands of Perez in a tag team match. But while he's a fine scientific wrestler, Perez is not the most dangerous opponent Kevin has faced by any means. Perez is undefeated since coming to the World Class area five months ago but Kevin has handled more imposing and intimidating men, including the ferocious Nord the Barbarian. Kevin is a champion and should be afraid of nothing.

"Ah, but that's where you're mistaken," insisted Hart. "Wrestlers are *never* afraid of getting hurt. Even a wimp like Kevin isn't afraid of getting hurt. A wrestler's biggest fear is of losing, especially losing a title. Also of getting totally outclassed in the ring.



Perez and Von Erich fight it out on the concrete after Perez interferes in an Adias-Von Erich match (above). Fritz Von Erich is at ringside to watch his son's back, and he even gets involved himself (below). Fritz was a member of the panel that deemed Kevin unfit to defend his title. Was he protecting his son?



That's the fate Von Erich faced that night in Dallas, and his father knew it. He didn't want to see his son get embarrassed by a superior wrestler, so he had the commission help get him out of it."

Kevin, however, insists that his father had nothing to do with his absence. "Listen, my father's a member of that commission and they made a decision," Kevin said. "I didn't like it, especially after the doctor gave me a clean bill of health, but I couldn't do anything about it. Besides, why should I show up at the arena when I knew I wasn't gonna be wrestling? It's just that the timing of the whole thing was bad, me having to give up the belt and all. I wish I could've been there. I really do."

Less convincing words have never been spoken. Kevin says he wishes he could have been there, but does so

half-heartedly. Maybe he was tired of being champion. Maybe he wanted a rest. And maybe he was under Fritz's orders to stay away. After all, father *does* know best. Father has been around for a long time.

"I refuse to give further credibility to such a ridiculous idea," said Fritz when asked whether he was protecting his son. "It was the board's decision, plain and simple."

But Fritz Von Erich is an influential member of the board. A major heavy-weight title was on the line. The integrity of the World Class title is at stake. When a title changes hands by forfeit, its value decreases. Was this a responsible decision for the board to make?

Maybe not, but maybe it wasn't the board's decision, and maybe we'll never know why Kevin forfeited the belt. The World Class title mystery might never be solved. □

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THE SUPERPOWERS

(Continued from page 35)

right there to help out. You think it's coincidence? You think it doesn't matter? I'll tell you why I'm not too upset right now. It's because I know that Rhodes and Koloff are history. All the signs are there."

For all his rhetoric, Dillon appears to have a point. Why did Rhodes find it necessary to go after the U.S. belt? Sure, Rhodes *has* held every other major NWA title, but this was Koloff's battle. Since early 1986, Koloff has concentrated his energies on the U.S. title. It has been his battle all the way, including many epic matches against Magnum T.A. and Luger.



Luger's chinlock worsens the nasty cut above Dusty's eye. Dusty's pursuit of Luger is preventing Nikita from getting any rematches.

Meanwhile, Rhodes concentrated on Ric Flair's NWA World title and Blanchard's TV belt. Rhodes claimed that he was trying to help Nikita, but what kind of help is his campaign against Luger? If Dusty wins the U.S. belt, is he going to defend it against Nikita? Probably not.

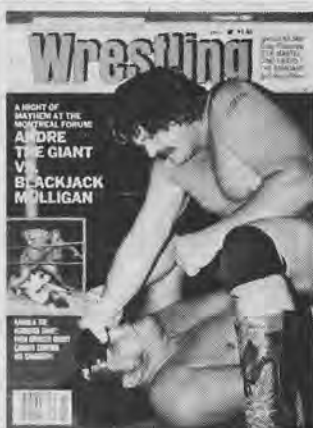
"Nikita was upset in a big way," said a source close to both Rhodes and Koloff. "Nikita felt that he could get

(Continued on page 60)

Wrestling

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June 1986/Hogan-Muraco, Midnight Express, Freebirds, Battle of Belts II.
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 August 1986/Crockett Cup Tourney, Jake Roberts, Midnight Rockers, Von Erichs, Wrestling II.
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 July 1987/Midnight Express, Savage-Steamboat, Adams, NWA in Boston.
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THE SUPERPOWERS

(Continued from page 58)

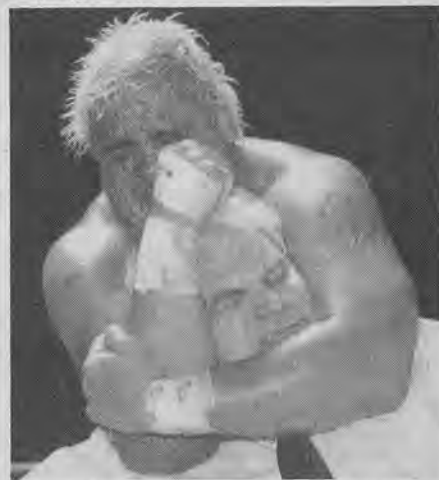


J.J. Dillon interferes as Dusty puts Luger out with his "Weaverlock," named for NWA veteran Johnny Weaver.

the belt back from Luger and he wanted as many matches as possible. Then here came Dusty, who already has enough to keep himself busy, sticking his nose in and taking Nikita's title shots away. Let me tell you, Nikita couldn't believe it."

Over the past year, however, Koloff has learned to control his emotions. According to our source, Nikita decided that he wouldn't criticize Rhodes on national TV about his U.S. title hopes, and he knew that he didn't want to turn on Dusty, not with Magnum T.A. still stuck in the middle. Nikita pledged to fight for Magnum, and that meant fighting alongside Dusty, for better or worse. So Koloff fought fire with fire and asked for a shot at the TV title.

"That was a really low blow," said the source. "Dusty's been a part of the TV title picture for the past two or three years, and here was his best friend interfering. And to make it even worse, Nikita fought his butt off and won the belt. Naturally, Dusty had to act like he was happy for his teammate, but inside you know he was hurting. The TV title was *his* scene, and here was Nikita stealing the show."



Dillon gets a taste of the "Weaverlock" as a price for his intrusion.

In other words, Dusty, *touche*. Advantage, Nikita. But therein lies the problem. How long can a friendship last when a silent war is being waged? Now that the first shots have been fired, it's only a matter of time before full-scale war breaks out. Rhodes' feud with Blanchard revolved around the TV title. Now that Blanchard has lost the belt, Dusty will most likely concentrate on Luger. But that can't make Nikita very happy, because the TV title is not nearly as valuable as the U.S. belt. He *still* wants a piece of Luger.

"Lex Luger has what is mine, and I will not give up," said Koloff. "I have TV title and am very happy with that, but it is not enough. I still want U.S. belt. I still want Luger, and I don't care who tries to get in way. I will just exterminate them."

Rhodes also doesn't care who gets in the way of his U.S. title quest. "That's the one missing piece of 'The Dream's' trophy case," Rhodes said. "I'm not gonna go after my good friend Nikita's TV title, so now I have no choice but to go after Luger. And when 'The Dream' says he's gonna get something, you know he's gonna get it."

It's a sticky situation, one which threatens to get even more complicated in the coming months. When two men are going after the same goal, rules of friendship no longer apply. Only one man can have the gold. The others are all enemies. □

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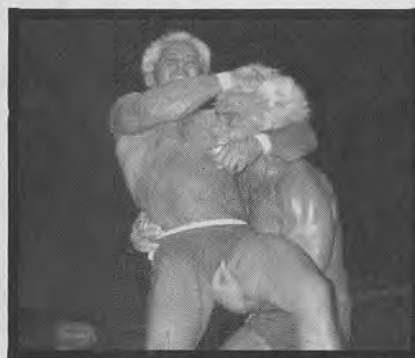
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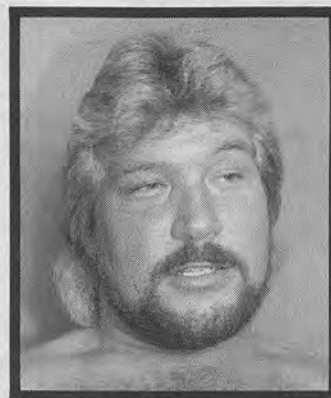
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HAYES VS. BUBBA

(Continued from page 31)



Hayes whips Bubba with his boot. The Freebird felt that he had to take such drastic action because Rogers was becoming too much for him. Hayes swears he'll take Rogers a lot more seriously when they meet again.

Yes, Rogers was built for mayhem. This 348-pound tower of power from Louisville, Kentucky, appeared to be a quiet, well-mannered individual when he worked for Cornette. He was a bar bouncer with a good job. Under Akbar, the full force of his power has been unleashed. And, unfortunately for Michael Hayes, Rogers decided to break loose just in time for their anything-goes, no-holds barred, "Badstreet" matches.

Their wild battle at the Cowtown Coliseum was a prime example of how brutally violent a Rogers-Hayes match can be. Ninety-five percent of the match took place outside the ring, and for the most part Rogers was the aggressor. "At one point," Hayes recalled, "that maniac had me in the center of the ring. I figured he'd try to slam me for the pin, but instead he just picked me up and tossed me out of the ring. I had no idea how strong he was."

Once the action moved onto the ring apron, Rogers was in perfect position for his bloody assault. With Akbar looking on menacingly from

one corner of the ring, Rogers worked on Hayes' face, back, and midsection, pounding the Freebird further into submission with each powerful blow. Hayes tried to use his boots and a ringside chair on Rogers, but they had little effect.

"He tried to choke all the air out of me," Hayes said following the double-countout verdict. "He would've tried to kill me if the referee didn't get in the way. I've never been more afraid of getting killed in the ring than I was that night. I don't say this too often, but I was crazy to take Rogers as lightly as I did. Next time around, I'm gonna have to give him everything I've got."

Next time around? Can Hayes be serious? Only a true madman would be fool enough to step into the ring against a man so set on destruction as Big Bubba Rogers!

"If Bubba kills Hayes, don't blame me," said Akbar. "He's like a wild pit bulldog whose favorite bone has been taken away. Anyone who messes with Bubba now is asking for death." □

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THE INSIDER

(Continued from page 18)



David Crockett interviews former U.S. champion Nikita Koloff. Ellner wonders why Koloff was rated ahead of Barry Windham in the NWA, but behind him in the Top 10. This apparent confusion is one reason Ellner is resigning from the ratings board.

skills? The editorial board, of course. One could search the Top 10 far and wide—but where's Stan Hansen? And where, oh where, is Bruiser Brody? Brody was named the best wrestler in the world in a scientific study conducted by *Wrestling Superstars*. Aren't his "inherent skills" up to snuff to put him ahead of Wendell Cooley?

Like most polls utilizing supposed scientific data, our ratings are not worth the paper they're written on. Until a better way is realized, I wash my hands of the entire bloody mess.

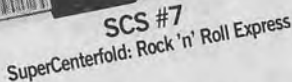
NEWS ITEM: Ellner Selected Worst Writer During The PWI Years.

Am I devastated? Shall I ever recover from this enormous slight? Will I slit my wrists and bleed to death over the ballot box?

I don't think so. I have no doubts that my detractors in the poll conducted for the 100th issue of our sister publication *Pro Wrestling Illustrated* (December 1987) are Rock 'n' Roll Express fans, that they drool over Kerry Von Erich, scream for Hulk Hogan, faithfully read Bill Apter's column, belong to the PTL Club, wear "I Love Oliver North" buttons, and vote for Ronald Reagan. To be unilaterally reviled by such an accumulation of morons brings me unrelieved happiness. My columns have more words than pictures; they challenge the mind, attempt to rustle the waters. How could these complacent people, living in Ignorance, Texas, or Closed Mind, North Carolina, possibly respect me? My intention in these pages was never to be liked—by wrestlers, fans, or my fellow editors.

I have exceeded my goals. □

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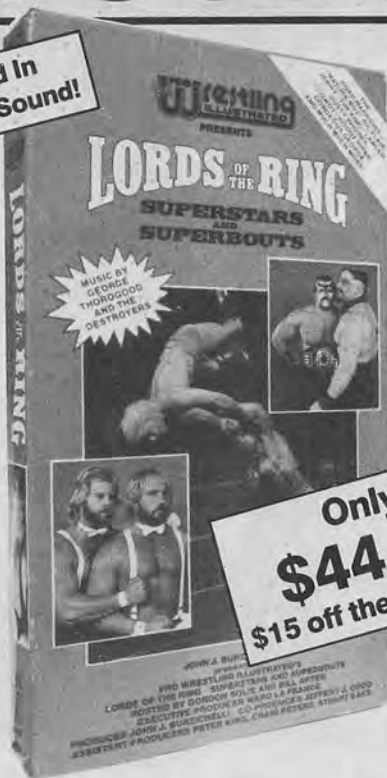
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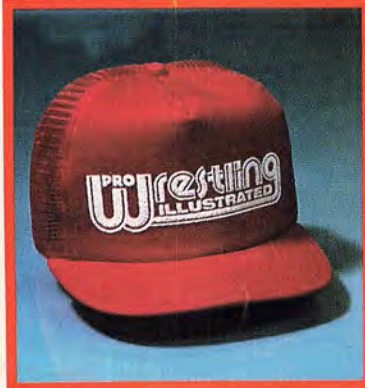
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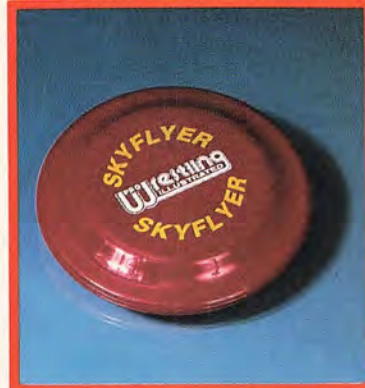
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